

Moldova News

We want to see vibrant communities of Jesus followers among the least reached

Security: N - no restrictions



Prayer that holds back the rain (p.5)

- Moldovan students follow in the footsteps of Jesus in a mission experience they will not forget

Today is the day of salvation (p.7)

- a summer outreach team is amazed to see person after person turn to faith in response to their message



There is nothing better than knowing that God is with you in the ministry you are involved in, knowing He goes before you and guides your path as you work alongside Him to enlarge His Kingdom.

This summer was yet another great opportunity, as our team was involved in many villages, reaching out to thousands of children, visiting hundreds of homes, where the Gospel was shared. Talking to different team members at the end of the summer, I felt the enthusiasm and joy as they were telling me of the wonderful ways God had worked through them personally and all those who joined the outreaches: the way God provided all the time by bringing the right people before them to hear the gospel, how the Lord even stopped the rain for the gospel to be shared in good weather, about people getting to know the Lord and His divine anointment in so many other cases. You can read more in the stories that follow.

God is working in an extraordinary way in Moldova, but still, another thing I hear from our missionaries, pastors and other believers: we need more workers. We do feel the words of Jesus, *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.”* As there are more opportunities in front of us, we see the need for more workers to disciple the new believers, praying as well that these disciples will make disciples who in turn will again make disciples.

Please pray with us, that the Lord will bring the workers who are needed in the least reached areas of Moldova and the world. If you feel that the Lord is calling you, please, don't hesitate.

Thank you for standing with us in the ministry!



Eugen Ciumac
Field Leader Moldova

People of all ages joining us short-term from around the world; the very first summer outreach specifically for Moldovan participants; outreaches in many places that have no church; support for local ministries and church planters; youth & children's programs; home visits, practical help and material aid...

Love Moldova 2019 was all of this and more - all to help people see Jesus!

Thank you for your part in this!



“God really exists!”

A couple recognises God's presence and care through the help they receive from a visiting outreach team.

“God really exists!” Nicolai kept repeating these words again and again, as he sat eating lunch with the team that had visited his home the past two days. It was his conclusion to what he had experienced at the hands of that team.

Nicolai's village had never received an outreach team before, and there being only one single believer living in the village meant that most people had never been exposed to the gospel. This summer one Love Moldova team was trekking through the area near Cobileia, where a local OM team supports a newly planted church, and besides supporting the ministry happening in the region, they could also visit some new villages. “We really saw how God had gone ahead of us”, they shared. “It was the first time programs were done in these villages, but the children were so open and wanted us to stay longer.” In the same way, the people they visited were welcoming and had clearly been prepared by God-like Nicolai and his wife:

When the team came to their home, this couple received them warmly and they had a good time of fellowship, talking about faith, answering many questions and giving the couple a Bible. However, the visitors did not want to offer only words, but desired to also demonstrate God's love in action, so they asked if they could help in any practical way. Nicolai hesitated, but after the team repeated their offer several times, he admitted there was a lot of grass that needed cutting, which he didn't know how to manage by himself. The team set to work - until the grass cutter broke and could not be fixed. As it was already turning to evening, the team had to leave, but promised to come back the next day to finish the job with a scythe. It was a great encouragement to Nicolai that they kept their word. All morning, as they worked together and later shared a meal, they continued talking about God and answering questions from the Bible. It was then that Nicolai expressed his conviction that God truly exists. He shared that, just before the team's first visit, he and his wife had worried about all the work needed around their home. They both have health problems and therefore struggle with practical tasks. “Only yesterday we were talking about how much there is to be done and wondering how we would manage - and then you came!” Nicolai told them. “Through this we really saw that God exists,” he explained and added, “We promise we'll read the Bible you gave us!”

Some time after the outreach, the believer living in that village wrote to the team, thanking them for their work in the village and especially their visit to Nicolai and his wife: “They are now really interested and truly looking for God”, the message said, “and their home is always open for believers to visit.”



The harvest is ready!

“Often, when you try to bring the gospel, people don't want to hear,” OM worker Andy said, “they don't think they need it. But it's not always like this. Sometimes you come to a place and just go ‘wow!’ - and I had such an experience this summer. It was amazing and so encouraging to see how ready people are for the gospel!”

Andy and his wife Rianna helped to lead a team for an outreach in the village of Putinești, located in the Florești region. They were told to expect 40 children to their program, but 80 came daily - even the state kindergarten came to join them on the field. The kindergarten also agreed to host part of the team in their rooms while they stayed in that village. Through the children's programs the team could also develop a relationship with one of the local librarians, who was eager to discuss about Jesus' life and the Christian faith in more detail. She fully supported and appreciated the work of the team and on the last day of the children's program took it upon herself to keep the children in line and well-behaved as they waited to receive food packages. The people whom the team spoke to readily received the gospel and then were keen to watch the program the next day. Many desired a Bible for themselves or for their children. “Many of them recognise that there is a God,” Rianna said, “but they do not yet know Him as their personal Father, or as the Lord of Lords, because no-one has yet explained to them who God really is.”

Putinești has no local church, but another church in a nearby village desires to have a missionary family live there to reach out and establish a church community. The team felt privileged to get to know the story of one of these believers, who had poured so much of his own time, money and energy into this short-term outreach. This man had grown up in the Communist era and at that time was sneaking 15 km to visit the orthodox church in the neighbouring village whenever he could. Later he turned away from the Christian faith and, although he allowed his wife and children to attend an evangelical church, he refused any kind of offer or persuasion. Now, this man has changed his life around, got over many addictions and is committed to sharing God's glory across his village. His friends, who are currently living abroad, have given him permission to use their house for this work. He intends to refurbish the house and then host a missionary family there as well as buy an abandoned building across the road and use it as a building for church meetings. “Maybe you will come back and join us!” were his final words to the team.

“The harvest is ready here in Moldova!” Rianna concluded. “Who will join us to be part of our Local Ministry Teams?”

Many of the ‘Love Moldova’ summer outreach teams were working in places without a church, or supporting the church planting work of our local ministries in places such as Cobileia, Soroca or Lozova.

*At the same time there are several regions, like Florești, where we'd like to send more **Local Ministry Teams** to help plant churches in areas with little or no evangelical presence - but we need people to be part of these teams.*

Will you join us?



a ‘Love Moldova’ team doing outreach in Cobileia, Juli 2019

Moldovans in Mission

This summer we put another focus on creating opportunities for local believers, offering different ways of helping Moldovans be involved in missions - whether by giving Moldovan students a very first taste of mission and the experience of God using them to reach the unreached places of their own country, or helping a faithful Moldovan church worker extend his reach to new places, or allowing a Moldovan OM worker to gain new perspectives through a short-term outreach in a different part of the world.

Opening a door for local workers

“My highlight of this summer was being part of an outreach team that helped a local pastor connect with surrounding villages where he wants to start doing ministry.” OM worker Oxana was encouraged to see how the international team she helped to lead was the perfect link needed to open doors for local work. This was in Soroca, a region of Moldova that has very few churches and a big need for the gospel, but many people are suspicious of a ‘new religion’ and the pastor had not found a ready entry when trying to go to these villages before. In the same way, the mayor was still very sceptical when the leader of the outreach team went to him to introduce themselves and the ministry they wanted to do. However, it was obviously an advantage to have an international team, and this attraction - as well as the fact that they had food parcels to offer as part of the ministry - opened the door, so the mayor allowed them to come. The outreach included daily children’s programs and home visits with food parcels, talking with people about their life, sharing the gospel with them and praying with or for them. Later on, the mayor visited one of the children’s programs. After seeing what they were doing, he again talked to the team leader and this time said that for the next days the team could ask him for whatever they needed, and that he was looking forward to seeing them again. God uses people from all over the world to open doors and break the ground in unreached places in Moldova!



A change of perspective

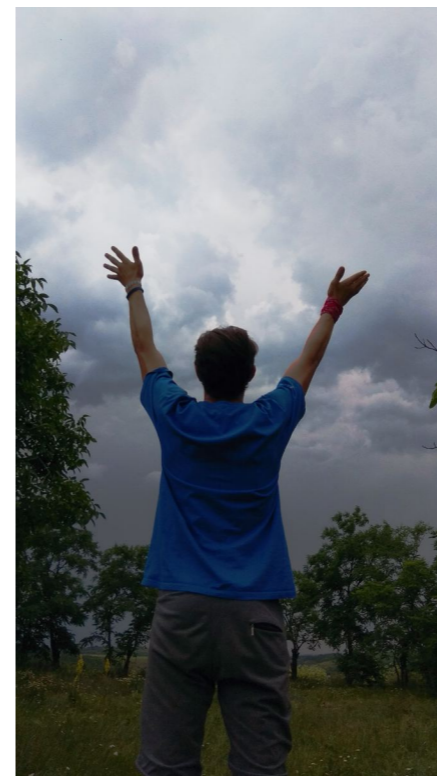
This summer one of our Moldovan OM workers, Pavel, took part in a short-term mission trip to North Africa - an outreach organised by a Moldovan worker who is serving long-term in this specific country. Pavel described this trip as an exciting and eye-opening experience:

“We had the chance to work with refugee children from Sudan, who had fled their home country. Pretty much all of them were from Muslim families. Knowing the situations of war in their place of origin, we did our best to help lead these children away from the familiar feelings of pain, crying, loss or hunger and instead make them feel valued and important. We offered activities they could enjoy, as well as a delicious meal at the end of each program. At the same time, we were eager to give them the chance to meet Jesus - both through our actions, as well as by sharing Bible stories that show Jesus as Lord and Saviour. I was encouraged to see how God worked in the hearts of these children, showing them that they are not forgotten, and that He is full of love for them. But more than that, during that time God also worked in my own heart in a special way, showing me how blessed I truly am in my own country and in my family.”



Prayer that holds back the rain

Our first summer outreach specifically for Moldovan participants was a great encouragement for these students, who saw God at work as they followed in the footsteps of Jesus.



“We felt like Jesus’ disciples: walking from village to village, being taken alongside Him into ministry, being taught, being sent out and then returning to share and evaluate what we experienced.” This was the reaction of a group of Moldovan students who had just returned from a short-term outreach in their own country - the first time we had organised such an opportunity specifically for Moldovan participants.

OM worker Vlad led a team of 19 participants from 14 different Moldovan churches, and for six days they walked from village to village, sleeping in tents, making food on a campfire - and sharing Jesus. “We didn’t have any classroom teaching,” Vlad said, “but they learned as we went along. Our classroom would be on the road, under a tree or around the campfire. We tried to prepare them for sharing Jesus with children, youth and adults; to teach them various methods of sharing the gospel; to find out their gifts and abilities - and then create opportunities for them to use these.”

Before setting out, as these participants had shared their expectations and reasons for joining, many had expressed their desire to see God at work, but also admitted they weren’t sure how to be involved themselves. “I have heard much about missions, but I’ve never had the chance to take part myself and see with my own eyes how God works in mission,” one of them said, while another simply stated, “I want to see how God can use me.” And God answered that desire:

In the second village, Vlad challenged a participant to share his personal testimony. “I have never done this before”, was his initial objection, but he accepted the challenge, and after a game of football with the youth from the village, he shared how Jesus had changed his life. “What do I need to do to have eternal life?” one of the young people asked the team in response - and accepted Jesus as Lord of his life that evening. He asked for a Bible and stayed for four more hours, until 11pm, to listen to the team.

In the last village the team planned a big outreach with different events for children, youth and adults. Preparations went well, but when the time came for the children’s program to start, the sky turned black, you could see a big storm was approaching, and the team could feel the first drops of rain. Vlad realised that among the 19 participants there was one girl who did not have any specific task in the upcoming programs, so he took her aside and instructed her: “Your responsibility for the next hours is to pray - pray that it doesn’t rain, so that we can bring the good news to this village that has no evangelical witness.” The girl’s eyes grew wide as she stared at Vlad, revealing that she did not feel up to this task - but she, too, allowed herself to be challenged. She found herself a place somewhere at the margins, and for the whole duration of the programs - a span of several hours - she was in prayer. No rain or wind hindered the team throughout this time. They saw that right on the other side of the nearby river it rained heavily, all around them rain poured down from a sky that was black with storm clouds, but just above their place it was dry, and they could even see a patch of pale light sky. That evening three of the village youth requested Bibles and prayer from the team. “I have never prayed like this!” the girl exclaimed, when asked about that experience afterwards. “I have never seen such a response to prayer, either, seeing with my own eyes how immediately on the spot God answered and held back the rain.” The whole team was amazed and encouraged, saying they had never received such a quick and direct answer to prayer. “Everything is possible,” they concluded, “and nothing can stand against God’s work - no wind, no storm, no rain.”

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Bringing **material aid** - like food parcels or school supplies - not only relieved the needs of the poor, but also opened doors for teams and local believers to visit families, share about God and overcome prejudices against local churches.

An unplanned visit to church

Despite deformations in his arms and legs, you could see that six-year-old Vova is a happy boy. He enthusiastically welcomed the team that came to visit his home, merrily chatted with them and generously offered them some of the sweets they had just given him.

When Vova's mother had given birth to triplets after 14 years of not being able to have children, the parents had rejoiced in this blessing - but it also became a challenge, even more so as one child has a handicap. The parents take turns going abroad for three months each to earn enough money to provide for their needs; while the parent that remains has to work long hours, too. In their absence, the three children are cared for by their grandmother, who was also the one receiving the visitors. She smiled when she saw the food parcel - a very welcome gift - but apologised for not having the document the team needed to formalise the provision of this gift. She assured them that the children's father would drop by at the church the following day to provide it. The team leaders weren't very hopeful about this, as in such cases people tend to promise whatever is needed to receive the gift, but often not follow up on it. Moreover, many are reluctant to enter an evangelical church, which they are often prejudiced against. Nevertheless, the following afternoon the father really did come to the church and, rather than just dropping off the document, he stayed for over half an hour. He read all the Bible verses on the church walls and then engaged in a conversation about God. He expressed how painful it had been for him to see how his healthy children had bullied Vova, until he stepped in to educate them about the unfairness of this behaviour. It was a perfect opportunity for the team to explain about sin, which causes us to hurt each other deliberately, and to help him understand that this is what Jesus died for and why we need Him to restore our relationship with God and others.



Rather than just dropping off the document, he stayed for over half an hour. He read all the Bible verses on the church walls and then engaged in a conversation about God.

"Finally, I will fit in..."

"You can take the picture home and finish it there," I suggested to the girl, who was still busy colouring, though our team had to pack up and leave. "But at home I have no coloured pens," was her reply...

This incident from a children's program reflects the situation of many children in Moldova. Especially the start of the new school year in September puts a strain on many families with low income and/or many children, as they have to buy all school supplies themselves. We were happy to again be able to supply many children from poorer backgrounds with school bags filled with all the necessary books, pens and other supplies they need.

One of the children on the list for receiving this gift was eight-year-old Vera from the village of Vorniceni - a place the young church in Lozova is reaching out to. Rumours had it that Vera was an angry child who would spit and shout at people and if she would get something she didn't like, she would just throw it away. "As soon as I heard these comments, I started to pray that we would be able to have a good contact with Vera and to tell her that she is loved by God," our local worker Stefanie said. Even so, the girl's reaction to the gift surprised her: Vera jumped up and down, exclaiming, "Now I have exactly the same bag as the other girls in my class, and I will fit in with the others!" She took the bag, checked its content and, after several 'wow's and 'oh's, she hugged Stefanie, thanking her with a big smile on her face. "Praise God, no angry Vera was seen, but a very happy and thankful girl, who just wants to be accepted and loved," Stefanie concluded. "While I hugged her, I told her that she is a special girl and that Jesus loves her and cares for her. May the schoolbag continue to be a reminder of His love for her!"

The gift of school supplies not only brings momentary joy and relief, but also has a real impact on the children's educational prospects, as often children from such backgrounds will fall behind at school simply because of a lack of utensils for taking notes or doing their homework. Thank you to all who have helped to supply the funds for this project!



A place of refuge

"Driving our car on a barely passable road up to a ridge above the village - the place where we would have our children's program each day - I thought how difficult it would be for the children, who had to walk all that way from their homes," OM worker Kelly remembers his first impression of the village of Nicolaevca. "However, as I spent this week with them, I saw that these children were happy to come and would have gladly walked even twice as far - not only because it was a beautiful place, but I realised that for them it was also a place of refuge: a place away from a drunk parent or someone who might beat them, a place where they could play and simply be children, a place where they were safe and loved.

Every day as we arrived at the field they would be waiting, some 40-50 of them and many parents too, and each day more children came. They would be sitting calmly over at the edge of the trees where it was cooler, patiently waiting for us to unload the van for the program. We would take out our parachute, balls and sports equipment and watch them run to us as if they were trying to win a race. It's heart-breaking to see that in many villages the children have no balls, jump ropes, frisbees - nothing to play with. Here we could see how much they enjoyed having time to simply play, then we would gather them together for songs, a skit, Bible verse, Bible story and craft, all illustrating the day's theme. It always amazes me how quickly the children learn and want to share what they have learned. As they walked away at the end of each program, they would turn to look at us almost as if they wondered if we would return the next day. The expressions on their faces changed, knowing that their time of refuge was over for the day and it was back to reality. When we visited some of their families in the afternoons, we could see that a different atmosphere prevailed in their homes, and they were not as relaxed and open to talk or listen to what we had to say." We are thankful to have been able to provide this safe space for a time, but we pray that what they heard on the beautiful hilltop will survive and grow to become a living hope in the grim realities of their ordinary lives.



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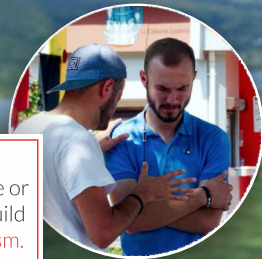
Today is the day of salvation

Outreach teams were amazed to see how God had prepared a harvest and was working in people's hearts. One team was so excited about what God did in just one single day, that they sent out a news post right from the village:

Good morning from Moldova! We have an incredible story of God working through our team and in the hearts of many Moldovan people from yesterday. We did a couple of house visits and in one of the visits our team encountered a lady who couldn't talk. She made it clear by nodding that she wanted to give her life to the Lord, and she was led in a prayer. At her front gate the team met two other ladies. They thought they were perfect. The team shared some Bible verses with them, and they realised they were sinners. With tears in their eyes they both gave their lives to the Lord. They wanted the team to come to their house to share the gospel with their son. They did and he gave his life to the Lord. The team left that house and as they were walking down the road, they met a man and they shared the gospel with him, and he gave his life to the Lord. How amazing is that! The harvest is plentiful in Moldova!



short-term outreaches in Moldova



Travel on a **raft** to unreached villages along the river Nistru, **trek** from village to village or travel by train, bike or horse and cart; run **children's camps**, do **home visits**, build a **playground**, reach out to **youth** or do **street evangelism**.

Every summer, there is a variety of exciting options for two-week outreaches in Moldova. We also offer customised outreaches throughout the year.

Experience how **God can use you to bring joy, hope and transformation**, as you share Christ in unreached villages or come alongside local believers who reach out to their country's least reached communities.

Interested in longer-term mission opportunities?

Our five-month Mission Discipleship Training MDTe³ gives you a thorough preparation and exposure to mission. We are also looking for people to join our team in Moldova, helping to plant churches in little reached regions or preparing others for mission.

For more information visit www.om.org/md or contact your local OM office.

options 2020

MDTe³ (in Moldova and Romania)

02 February - 04 July 2020

contact: MDTe3.md@om.org

Love Moldova

- A: 07-20 June
- B: 27 June - 10 July
- C: 13-26 July
- D: 02-15 August

*River & Trekking not available in period A

Love in Action - Village Outreach

- Construction Outreach
- Church Planting Outreach
- River Adventure*
- Trekking Adventure*
- Go 4 Adventure
- Teens in Mission

God responds when we step out in faith

I knew that it would be challenging to be part of a 'Go4Adventure' outreach: With this kind of outreach you often go just by faith, you're unsure where you will sleep, may have no possibility to wash etc. But uncertainty is also a great chance to experience God's provision, and we really saw that He is faithful and responds to our prayers.

In one village we had no idea what to expect: We did not know anything about the situation, had no person to contact, no idea what we'd be allowed to do. So before going there, we prayed for the time ahead - specifically for a chance to talk to the mayor and for children to come to our program. Someone prayed for 50 children and for some reason in my mind I thought it would be nice to exceed that mark, so I prayed for 51.

As we entered the village, we approached the very first person we met on the street and introduced ourselves. This man turned out to be the mayor, and we even ended up having lunch with him at his home! He was very supportive, and we were soon able to set up our first children's program. The weather forecast wasn't too good, and as we were starting the program, it began to rain, but once more we prayed - the rain stopped right away, and we were able to do our activities with the children. At the end of the program we handed out some snacks and small gifts and I asked a team member to find out how many gifts we had given away. After counting the remaining items and calculating, he came back to me with his answer: 51! As soon as we had finished the program and the children had left for their homes, it started to rain again...

We experienced many more answers to prayer - things we could have never imagined happening, as well as a lot of small details that maybe other people would have called a simple coincidence. However, they were so in line with our prayers, and there were so many of them, that it was impossible to believe they just happened by chance - we truly saw God had His hand in it all.

(Andrei, OM worker in Moldova, about his experience during Love Moldova 2019)

Get involved:

- PRAY for our ministries or
- GIVE towards a project or
- GO - join a programme:
 - Love Moldova (2 weeks)
 - MDTe³ (5 months)

We are also constantly looking for people to join us mid- & long-term!
Current needs include:

- a professional **accountant** willing to serve long-term
- a **Training Facilitator** for our 'Mission Discipleship Training' & 'Challenge into Missions' course
- **Local Ministry Team** workers serving in a village community to start ministry in unreached areas

[Contact us for more information!](#)

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