

## 17 October: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

### Showing solidarity with those less fortunate than us: a message with the support of the Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans

This year saw devastating events take place right here in Europe and all around the world: a brutal and uncalled war of aggression by Russia on European soil, a running energy crisis, the immediate effects of climate change and biodiversity loss with historic droughts and killing floods.

The EU has shown its resilience by being united and staying the course and it has risen in solidarity with the victims of this war.

These crises are also opportunities for individuals to come together, and here in the Commission we can demonstrate what European and global solidarity really means. All of us, every single individual, everyone plays a part because everything, even the smallest thing that you do, that takes you into a more sustainable and equitable society is good and helpful, for people in need now, and for the next generations by being 'good ancestors'.

One action we can all take individually on this International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is to rally behind a positive and solidarity-based action on behalf of and in collaboration with the people who are less fortunate than we are. The challenges of poverty and social exclusion in the EU are addressed by "Give Eur-Hope", and in developing countries through "eu can aid!". Their solidarity, and the solidarity of our fellow staff members, has inspired initiatives and micro-projects which are funded by EU staff donations exclusively and are helping the poorest in many ways: to develop income-generating activities, to provide them with access to decent housing, clean water, schooling for their children, vocational training, and to help them participate in civic life. Two initiatives are presented below, from very different parts of the world, Nepal and Ukraine, but with similar need for energy sufficiency, albeit for different causes. Colleagues representing us in the EKIDEN run in Brussels this year will do so to raise funds for the two projects.

In our transition to a more sustainable and just society we need solidarity, and to make sure we do not leave anyone behind.

### Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President of the European Commission

**So join today: By donating as little as 10 € a month you'll show what the EU Staff generosity can achieve.**

Pascal Declaye, for **eu can aid!**

Baudouin Sury, for **Give Eur-Hope**



[www.eucanaid.eu](http://www.eucanaid.eu)  
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eu can aid! supports those who are victims of structural violence and facing poverty, hunger and misfortune. Most of the projects we finance come from countries that are still in the development phase, with populations often left to fend for themselves. Those projects request little in comparison to some big aid projects, often no more than a few thousands euros, but they are driven by real urgency and strong willpower to improve life and wellbeing of the local people.

eu can aid operates entirely on a voluntary basis and is funded by membership fees (mainly EU staff) and donations.



[www.giveeurhope.eu](http://www.giveeurhope.eu)    [info@giveeurhope.eu](mailto:info@giveeurhope.eu)

Give Eur-Hope is an association of EU staff members dedicated to the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the European Union. Run entirely on a voluntary basis, with funds raised through membership fees and donations from their colleagues and supporters, Give Eur-Hope promotes the solidarity of EU staff with less privileged people in EU Member States.

As you can imagine, the past year has been more difficult than usual, widening injustice even more. Below we share an initiative we have supported this year.

See more examples of our actions : [www.eucanaid.eu](http://www.eucanaid.eu)

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[www.giveeurhope.eu](http://www.giveeurhope.eu)

## Electricity as a way to build an improved ecosystem



Bakachol is an isolated 600 household village in Eastern Nepal at the foot of the Himalaya. Remote, with no access to the public road network, lacking electricity or water distribution. Eventually the people of Bakachol realised that development would not come to them unless they took the initiative. In 2008 Bakachol decided to build a local electricity generation and distribution infrastructure. The project called for exploiting domestic resources - manpower and hydraulic potential of local rivers. However, the initiative required external support.

A generator and a turbine were donated by a Norwegian supporter, further investment funds were obtained from a local authority, on top of it, the village took a bank loan. All civil engineering work was carried out by the inhabitants of Bakachol. School children now had the light to do their homework and agricultural production started investing in equipment such as electrical pumps and mills. The inhabitants of Bakachol even took initiative to build a dirt road. The effort to bring electricity to the community was a rough learning curve. In 2015, the big earthquake seriously damaged the power house and electricity production came to a stand-still. Germany's official technical agency for development aid (GIZ) then agreed to cover the cost of repair and the village committed to placing a fee for electricity.

Because nearly all development projects depend on the



availability of electricity, Bakachol decided to link the network to the national network grid, thereby enabling Bakachol to sell a surplus of electricity and enhancing the stability of the electricity provision. The bottleneck to all these projects is the deteriorating condition of the present generator. Its technology is outdated allowing only 50% of its nominal capacity, i.e. 70 KW. The aging generator is increasingly a risk factor and frequent repairs are costly and time consuming, putting at risk all the progress the village has been making.

**Luckily new technology does offer a solution – but the cost of a new generator is estimated at 10.000 euros and is well beyond local budget.** If, however, we can

## Power supply to help shelter victims of war



Faced with this unprecedented and devastating situation, Electriciens sans frontières mobilized volunteers and partners to provide support in the neighbouring countries where Ukrainian refugees headed.

The daily work was coordinated with the humanitarian partners such as the Red Cross and the Crisis and Support Centre of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. Because the protection of human lives is the top priority, the engagement will be long term and will revolve around:

- Securing electricity for buildings transformed into shelters
- Power supply to shelters and hospital facilities
- Meeting the electrical needs of local NGOs in border countries.

*What help has been delivered so far?*

Electriciens sans frontières were able to send more than a thousand solar lamps which were distributed by AICM. **GIVE EUR-HOPE contributed with 5,000 EUR for solar lamps to be distributed to the Ukrainian communities living in emergency.**



The equipment left Pantin, France, on June 15 and took more than two weeks to arrive to the premises of the AICM Foundation. They were blocked at the Ukrainian border because they did not have priority over United Nations convoys that were going through at the time. During the first weeks of July, the foundation's technicians, based in Kiev, tested the generators, and on July 12 AICM organized the first shipment of generators and lamps to the 21 emergency services throughout the Kharkiv



region, constantly under fire.

The second shipment was organized on July 22, with one of the generators and solar lamps for the inhabitants of Trostianets, a city in northeast Ukraine isolated by incessant fighting. 15 tons of medicines, food and hygiene products as well as 4 tanks 1000 liters were brought.

grant the requested financial support, it would allow the community to overcome the bottleneck to improving the ecosystem and livelihoods, especially related to new opportunities to the younger generation.

On July 29, 2 generators and solar lamps were delivered to Somy, just off the Russian border. "Our partner AICM informed that the local people were very happy with the solar lamps which can also be used by the firefighters" said the representative of Electriciens sans frontières.

### **Call for volunteers and new members!**

Our hope for the future is to have the possibility to award more promising funding requests and to see more communities with improved livelihoods.

Would you like to join as a volunteer or new member and contribute to the accomplishments of the communities in need?

Reach out to us at [info@eucanaid.eu](mailto:info@eucanaid.eu) or [info@giveeurhope.eu](mailto:info@giveeurhope.eu)