

## **The Price of War: The Invisible Wounds and Mental Help Global's Response**

War is counted in lives lost, cities reduced to rubble, and economies strained to the breaking point. But beyond these visible scars, the mental toll of war is one of its most devastating and enduring costs—one that is often overlooked in the rebuilding process. In Ukraine, where millions have faced displacement, loss, and prolonged trauma, the psychological consequences of war will shape the country for generations.

The Price of War Symposium has rightly highlighted these challenges, recognizing that war does not end when the last missile falls. The unseen cost of war manifests in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and moral injury, particularly among those who have served on the front lines. Veterans returning home often struggle to reintegrate, feeling alienated from civilian life, unable to process the horrors they have witnessed. Many suffer in silence, facing stigma, lack of mental health resources, and bureaucratic hurdles that prevent them from seeking help.

### **Mental Help Global: A Response to War's Hidden Crisis**

Mental Help Global (MHG) was founded as a direct response to this crisis, providing AI-driven mental health support for Ukraine's veterans, armed forces, and war-affected civilians. Our initiative recognizes that mental health care must be immediate, accessible, and stigma-free—which is why we have built an open-source, multilingual AI model to offer 24/7 confidential support in Ukrainian, English, and Russian.

For veterans and active-duty soldiers, MHG provides a critical lifeline. By integrating evidence-based interventions into an AI-driven support system, we help users navigate combat stress, PTSD, and reintegration challenges. Our platform does not seek to replace traditional therapy but instead acts as a bridge to professional care, offering immediate coping strategies and guidance in moments of crisis.

MHG's work is also part of a larger vision. Just as Ukraine is rebuilding its cities and infrastructure, we must rebuild its mental health ecosystem—ensuring that the country's defenders, who have sacrificed so much, do not bear the psychological burden of war alone. We believe this model has the potential to extend beyond Ukraine, with the hope of bringing our mental health AI to veterans in the United States and other nations facing similar challenges.

### **The True Cost of War**

The price of war is not just measured in military budgets and destroyed infrastructure—it is written in the sleepless nights of a soldier reliving combat, the child unable to focus in school because of trauma, and the millions who carry invisible wounds long after peace is

declared. As the world debates reconstruction and recovery, mental health must be part of the conversation.

Investing in accessible, innovative mental health solutions like MHG is not an act of charity—it is a necessity for national resilience, economic stability, and the long-term well-being of those who have fought for their country. A nation cannot truly heal if its people are left behind.

War extracts a cost, but how we respond to its aftermath defines our future. MHG stands as one solution in that fight, ensuring that mental health support is not a luxury, but a fundamental right for all those who have endured the unthinkable.

Clara Kaluderovic is a technology entrepreneur based in Houston and the Co-Founder and CEO of Mental Help Global, alongside Mitzi Perdue. She is also the Founder and CEO of ex2, an AI nonprofit supporting the establishment of an AI Center at the American University of Iraq–Sulaymaniyah. In addition, she has led innovation efforts in the data center industry. Before entering the startup world, Clara spent five years managing operations for a major oil and gas logistics provider in West Africa, headquartered in Nigeria. Of Ukrainian heritage, she is a Council on Foreign Relations Young Professional and a Fellow at the International Strategy Forum (SCSP).