

## UNICEF Photo of the Year 2022



### First Prize 2022

#### **Tigray, Ethiopia: Taking Refuge in Books**

Although destroyed, the library in this elementary school in Ethiopia's Tigray region is where two children have taken refuge in books. This little moment of happiness shows in their smiles. It is a rare moment. Because of the armed conflict with the central government, 5.2 million people in this region in northern Ethiopia are suffering from violence, displacement, malnutrition and a shortage of drinking water. Argentinian photographer Eduardo Soteras has been documenting the situation of children in Tigray since 2020: in refugee camps, in hospitals, in reception centres for girls who have been sexually abused. For example, when they are collecting firewood and looking for water. And he captures rare moments like the one that shows what the children of Tigray share with children all over the world: the need to be allowed to engage peacefully and curiously in something that brings them joy.

**Photographer: Eduardo Soteras, Argentina (Agence France-Presse)**



© Eduardo Soteras, Argentina (Agence France-Presse)

## Second Prize 2022

### Ukraine: I Once Had a Home

'I once had a home' is the title of a photo series by US photographer Ron Haviv, taken in Ukraine, a country that has been forced into a grueling defensive war. His pictures show people who have to flee and bid their homes and friends farewell, but also abandoned prams, destroyed bridges and shelled residential buildings. And they show basements and metro stations where children are born. Where they play. And where they learn. A teacher is reading stories to a group of girls and boys in a basement in the capital Kyiv. Perhaps it is an exciting fairy tale reflected in the eyes of the children. But it could also be all the emotions triggered by the children's experiences: fear, horror, and disbelief. Millions of Ukrainian women and their children have been displaced within their own country. As of November 2022, nearly 1,000 schools have been damaged, nearly 130 completely destroyed. At least 400 children have lost their lives to artillery fire, 800 have received serious physical injuries. The Right to Life (Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child); the Right to Rest and Leisure (Art. 31); the Right to Education (Art. 28): since the start of the war in February 2022, each time the alarm goes off, it is only underground that these rights can sort of be guaranteed for the girls and boys in Ukraine.

**Photographer: Ron Haviv, USA (Agency VII) - for 1843/Economist**



© Ron Haviv, USA (Agency VII)

## Third Prize 2022

### **Afghanistan: The Secret School for Girls**

Since the Taliban retook power in Afghanistan in August 2021, girls have again been banned from attending secondary schools. This is part of a policy to deprive women and girls of basic rights. As a result, more than one million girls are being denied the chance of an education, while the risk of exploitation, abuse, and early marriage increases. And this is happening despite the fact that children in Afghanistan are already threatened by hunger, poverty and disease, and a total of 13 million boys and girls are in need of humanitarian aid. But solidarity with the girls still exists, even if it has to remain hidden. For example, in the secret school that photographer Daniel Pilar has portrayed in his photo series. He discovered it in a makeshift building on the outskirts of Kabul, hidden in a backyard. Here, a young and courageous teacher also teaches 7th and 8th grade girls. Their hunger for education is stronger than any ban. Just like the brave teacher, however, parents who send their daughters to such schools must ensure that they remain anonymous.

**Photographer: Daniel Pilar, Germany (Agency laif) for FAZ**



© Daniel Pilar, Germany (Agency laif)



## Honorable Mention 2022

### Depok, Indonesia: The Silver People

Rifki Firmansyah is only twelve years old, but he already has to help his family to make ends meet. Since he was ten years old, he has been performing in the streets of the Indonesian city of Depok, together with other boys, as a 'silver kid', begging for a few rupiah and sometimes also something to eat, giving part of the money to his parents. Rifki usually paints himself with silver paint in the morning and then performs at traffic intersections as a small human robot until the afternoon. He does not attend school. The concoctions the boys use to paint their skin ranges from kerosene to lead, and contains chemicals and metals that they wash off their faces and bodies in the evening with soap, shampoo, and coarse detergents. But the 'silver kids' are less afraid of having their skin destroyed than they are of the police, as they told photographer Agoes Rudianto. Rifki, too, has already been arrested for 'disturbing public order'. Nevertheless, more and more children like Rifki can be found in the streets of Indonesian cities - especially since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

**Photographer: Agoes Rudianto, Indonesia, for GEOlino**



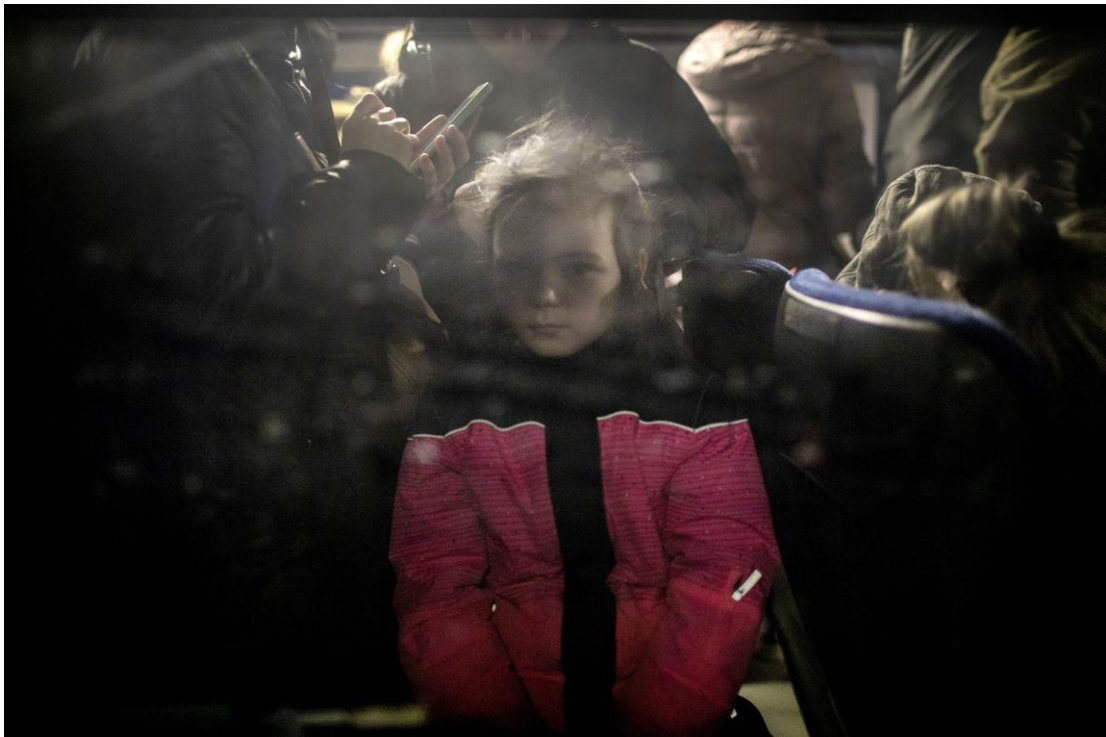
© Agoes Rudianto, Indonesia (GEOlino)

## **Honorable Mention 2022**

### **Ukraine: Run For Your Life**

Irpin and Bucha - two cities in Ukraine. Two names that have become a symbol of the horrors of war, of massacres and other crimes against Ukrainian civilians. Two places, along with the capital city, Kyiv, where Romanian photographer Amnon Gutman has documented what the attacks mean, for example, for the elderly, or young mothers. And especially what they mean for the children: heartbreaking farewells to loved ones; wounded minors who have to be treated in makeshift substitute hospital wards; long, fearful walks along unprotected streets; destroyed schools and homes; mourning at fresh graves. In the gaze of a lost and yet also strong-looking girl in a red anorak, all of this comes together, everything that war does to children: they are the ones who need a particularly great deal of strength to endure what is surely for them incomprehensible.

### **Photographer: Amnon Gutman, Romania**



© Amnon Gutman, Romania

## Honorable Mention 2022

### Ukraine: Toxic Stress

The numbers alone are frightening: millions and millions of refugees and displaced people; more than three million children in dire need of humanitarian aid; four million children in the country who are no longer able to attend school; and, in addition, the vast number of those who are in danger of suffering due to the expected shortages of electricity and water, and from hunger and cold. A gigantic task especially for organizations such as UNICEF. And there is something behind the bare numbers that is more difficult to quantify and more threatening to children in particular: one aid organization called it the 'toxic stress' they are exposed to. In his pictures, photographer Fabio Bucciarelli has documented how the experience of violence spreads like a poison in the souls of children. Some of it shows directly, in fearful embraces, for example; in attempts to hide under blankets; in the physical suffering of injured children and young people. Some of it is only hinted at: in a classroom ripped apart by war in Kharkiv; in the toys left behind on the table of a ruined apartment in the village of Mala Rohan. The list of risks for Ukraine's children extends far beyond the direct effects of war. It also includes the involuntary separation of families, the lack of teachers, the inadequate supply of clothing and food, and the threat of disease outbreaks.

### Photographer: Fabio Bucciarelli, Italy



© Fabio Bucciarelli, Italy

## Honorable Mention 2022

### Colombia: Green Hell

When the gigantic project of the 'Panamericana', a highway leading from Alaska to Argentina, was started in the 1930s, a part of the road remained unfinished. And it still is today: the Darien Gap, an almost impassable and highly dangerous jungle region in northern Colombia on the border with Panama, controlled by criminal gangs. For some time now, more and more people from Venezuela have been using precisely this dangerous route, about 100 kilometers long, to flee their crisis-ridden country and get to the USA. There are now hundreds of thousands who have tried this route. Photographer Federico Rios Escobar set out with a few of them for 25 days. Along the way, he captured scenes that show the hardships faced by the children of those fleeing. For days they have to cross steep mountains, ford rivers, covered in mud, clinging to the hands of their parents, who often set out wearing only sandals, without tents, without rain jackets, without flashlights, without tablets to disinfect the water they drink, and with too few provisions. It takes at least nine days to get through this green hell to the first camp on the other side in Panama. Escobar regularly met children, including a six-year-old, who had lost their parents along the way. But he also met children who still had the strength to comfort their parents.

**Photographer: Federico Rios Escobar, Colombia, for the New York Times**



© Federico Rios, Colombia (NY Times)



## Honorable Mention 2022

### Argentina: The Promise

'Dear Long Hair' is the title of a project that photographer Irina Werning began back in 2006. In this photo series, she portrays women in various Latin American countries who, with reference to indigenous traditions, are significantly less likely to pick up a pair of scissors or pay a visit to the hairdresser than others. "Cutting hair is cutting thoughts" is a sentiment encountered by the photographer. In Argentina, the coronavirus pandemic claimed an unusually large number of victims. But through it, Werning also met a girl who gave the subject of long hair a very current meaning. Antonella, like many others, was affected by the often particularly long school closures implemented in South America. As a result, she made a promise to cut her beloved hair the moment she could attend actual classes again. Antonella's hair grew apace with her worries about missing classes, losing friends, or eventually not wanting to learn anything anymore. After 260 days, the school finally reopened at the end of November 2021. And Werning was able to take that picture in which Antonella made good on 'la promesa', her promise.

### Photographer: Irina Werning, Argentina



© Irina Werning, Argentina (Pulitzer Center)



## Honorable Mention 2022

### **Afghanistan: The Price of Peace**

15-year-old Khalil Ahmad had to sacrifice his left kidney at the behest of his parents. They urgently needed the money to feed their eleven children. A cowering and scared little girl, five-year-old Parima was sold to a childless couple. Begging mothers hold their babies up to car windows, hoping for a little mercy. Begging women and children also sit outside bakeries in Kabul. A desperate mother borrows money and sells her earrings to get her malnourished toddler to a hospital. An internally displaced family forced to make do with a cave for their home; 18 years later they are still living there with their 6 children. Boys who should actually be attending school have to work instead as manual laborers. Images from a country where bullets now fly more seldomly, but whose population is suffering from droughts, crop failures, displacement, and the collapse of many civil structures. Photographer Mads Nissen called his photo series 'The Price of Peace'. But even if it is officially called peace, the social conditions in the country engender their own form of violence.

**Photographer: Mads Nissen, Denmark (Agency laif) for Politiken**



© Mads Nissen, Dänemark (Agency laif)

## Honorable Mention 2022

### Iran: Two Wings of a Butterfly

Zahra had a dream: to be as light as a butterfly. And to fly. One day. In this world, however, her dream will no longer come true. Zahra died at the age of 13. She spent the last three years of her life bravely fighting against bone cancer. One awful round after another. It began with chemotherapy, which was so futile that Zahra first had to have her right leg amputated, then required lumbar vertebrae surgery that resulted in her spinal cord being damaged and left her paraplegic. Iranian photographer Shayan Hajinajaf accompanied the girl's ordeal intensively and with great empathy: they shared moments when Zahra smiled and moments when she could barely breathe; moments of comfort with her family and moments alone in a hospital bed, attempts to walk at the beginning and the sheer agony at the end. According to the Iranian Pediatric Blood and Cancer Association, 2500 children under the age of 15 are diagnosed with cancer annually in Iran.

**Photographer: Shayan Hajinajaf, Iran (Agency ISNA)**



© Shayan Hajinajaf, Iran (Agency ISNA)