

## UKRAINE SITUATION

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

11 – 30 April 2015

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** Despite hopes for renewed commitment to the 12 February ceasefire over the Easter holiday, the period saw an unprecedented surge in fighting. The situation remains volatile and unpredictable with ceasefire violations occurring on a daily basis.
- **Protection concerns:** The Government is facing challenges to accurately registering IDPs. Accurate registration is essential to provide IDPs with access to social assistance and other forms of aid. UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Social Policy to improve the IDP database.
- **Legislation update:** A new Cabinet of Ministers Resolution, extending financial support to IDPs for a further six months, was approved on 31 March and is expected to come into effect in the next few days.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 11 April, UNHCR provided non-food aid to 2,500 people in government controlled areas. UNHCR also delivered 200 roofing panels in the heavily shelled village of Shchastya. In non-government controlled areas, UNHCR distributed 23,500 m2 of emergency shelter tarpaulin as well as blankets and clothes to some 3,250 people.



*Klaudiva, 84, a WWII survivor, still remembers reconstruction works in her hometown Shchastya, Luhansk region in 1950s. The village, whose name means 'happiness' in Ukrainian was under heavy shelling for several weeks in winter 2015. On 13 February, Klaudiva's apartment on the top floor of the building was badly damaged. She was offered a temporary place to stay by her neighbour. As no authorities have ever approached her with assistance, a single elderly lady looks desperate yet determined to stay in her town where she taught geography for 26 years. Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/M.Pavlovic*

#### KEY FIGURES

**1,255,700**

registered Internally Displaced People (IDPs) comprising:

**755,700**

pensioners

**289,700**

working age adults

**158,300**

children

**52,000**

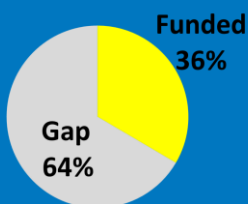
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Source: Ministry of Social Policy, Ukraine

#### FUNDING

**USD 41.5 million**

requested for the operation in 2015



#### PRIORITIES

- As part of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan, to lead protection, shelter and NFI clusters to help those forcibly displaced from their homes.
- Support Government in efforts to establish a central authority to deal with IDPs.
- Work with the Government to improve registration system, specifically procedures relating to pensioners and access to social assistance.
- Promote freedom of movement and humanitarian access.

## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

Despite hopes for renewed commitment to the 12 February ceasefire during Easter, the period saw an unprecedented surge in fighting, particularly in the vicinity of Donetsk city and the villages of Shyrokyne and Hranitne, near Mariupol. Since Easter, the fighting has de-escalated to some extent; however, violations of the terms of ceasefire continue to be reported on a daily basis. The situation remains volatile and unpredictable leading to uncertainty for both the population remaining in the conflict area and for IDPs hoping to return home. Between 30,000 and 40,000 IDPs are accommodated in collective centres in Ukraine.

As of 27 April there were 1,255,700 IDPs registered by the Ministry of Social Policy, representing an increase of 42,700 since 6 April. The comparatively low number of new registrations was mainly due to the Easter holiday.

There was a peak in movement of IDPs both in and out of non-government controlled areas over the Easter period, as people sought to spend time with their families. IDPs have also been returning to non-government controlled areas to check on property and land out of fear that they will lose it if it is considered to be abandoned. While some returns to non-government controlled areas have been reported, the number of long-term returnees remains unclear. Life in non-government controlled areas remains particularly difficult due to lack of livelihood opportunities. While the economy throughout Ukraine continues to suffer the consequences of the conflict situation, the economic situation in non-government controlled areas is especially difficult as supplies are restricted pushing up prices of utilities and everyday items, including food. Fear of persecution has also been mentioned by IDPs as a reason not to return to non-government controlled areas.

Reports from UNHCR Field Offices in Kharkiv, Mariupol and Sievierodonetsk as well as UNHCR implementing partner, the Right to Protection (R2P), indicate that IDPs continue to face difficulties obtaining Government-issued passes required to cross the line of contact. The Temporary Order on Movement requires people to obtain a pass in order to cross the line of contact. The bureaucratic paper-based system in place has given rise to corruption as people pay bribes to expedite the process. Others seek to circumvent the process entirely by avoiding official checkpoints on the line of contact at the risk of taking mined and other dangerous, uncontrolled routes. Despite promises by the President and the Government to reform the system, little has improved. Launch of an electronic system was scheduled for 25 March; however, the system has faced various technical problems and has not been fully implemented.

Cabinet of Ministers Resolution no. 212, extending financial support to IDPs provided by Resolution no. 505 for a further six months, came into effect on 23 April. This is a welcome development, though the assistance provided only targets relatively few people and at minimal level. UNHCR Field Offices report confusion among IDPs regarding the renewal procedure due to lack of information from the Government.

### External Displacement

UNHCR continues to monitor the refugee situation in neighbouring countries. According to government sources in receiving countries, the total number of people seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries now stands at 822,700, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (678,200) and Belarus (81,070).

The OSCE Observers monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that the situation continues to remain calm. Total cross-border traffic increased at both checkpoints compared to the previous week. The continued trend seen by the Observer Mission over the past two months is of more people returning to Ukraine through the two checkpoints. The average net flow of people going to Ukraine almost doubled during the week of 13 April with 602 people, compared to 310 the previous week.

As of 30 April, since the beginning of the crisis there were 3,648 applications for international protection in Germany, 3,270 in Poland, 2,647 in Italy, 1,637 in Sweden, 1,625 in France, 200 in Moldova, 50 in Romania, 50 in Hungary and 20 in Slovakia according to government sources in receiving countries.

*Data sources: Respective national asylum authorities*

## Achievements

### Protection<sup>1</sup>

#### Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster co-led by UNHCR and OHCHR has been finalizing its strategy, capitalizing on different inputs received by cluster members. The strategy aims at identifying the main protection risks for IDPs in Ukraine and to define responses.
- The Cluster discussed thematic issues such as the limitation of freedom of movement, hotlines (and referral of protection cases) and humanitarian evacuations. Guidance notes and key advocacy messages will be finalized based on these discussions.
- The Humanitarian Coordinator asked the Protection Cluster co-leads to activate a mine action sub-cluster. Meetings took place with relevant actors to come up with a proposal for the consideration of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).
- The Protection Cluster is consulting with its members and other sub clusters to look at decentralization at sub national level, taking into consideration coordination needs and existing structures.
- A Gender Capacity (GenCap) adviser co-hosted by UNHCR and UNFPA has arrived on a six-month deployment to Ukraine. Tasks include capacity building of the HCT, field teams and Cluster leads to ensure that the distinct needs of women, girls, boys and men of all ages are taken into account in the emergency response. The GenCap adviser will also provide technical leadership and support to the HCT in promoting effective Gender Equality Programming.



On 25 April, UNHCR Dnipropetrovsk launched the results of its month long survey of IDP protection risks and rights unmet. At the town library, in an open forum with a large attendance of displaced people, government officials and partners, the results of the Participatory Assessment exercise were released. Students of the Donetsk National University joined the discussion to voice their concerns and problems they face following the evacuation of the university to Dnipropetrovsk region. Photos: UNHCR Ukraine/ I. Koliada

#### Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- As part of UNHCR's commitment to improve the IDP registration process, UNHCR had a series of meetings at the Ministry of Social Policy to follow-up on development of the Government's IDP database. The Ministry presented the recently launched IDP pre-registration system, developed with UNHCR support. It was agreed that UNHCR will work with the Ministry's Data Processing and Information Centre to develop a guide for IDPs on how to use the online pre-registration system and to help disseminate information about the pre-registration system. UNHCR will also draft a request to the Ministry for additional statistical information on IDPs with age and sex disaggregation, place of origin and other relevant information held in the registration system. It will be proposed to have a member of UNHCR staff spend time with Ministry technical staff to conduct detailed analysis of the technical and data quality aspects of the database and make recommendations on support and improvements.

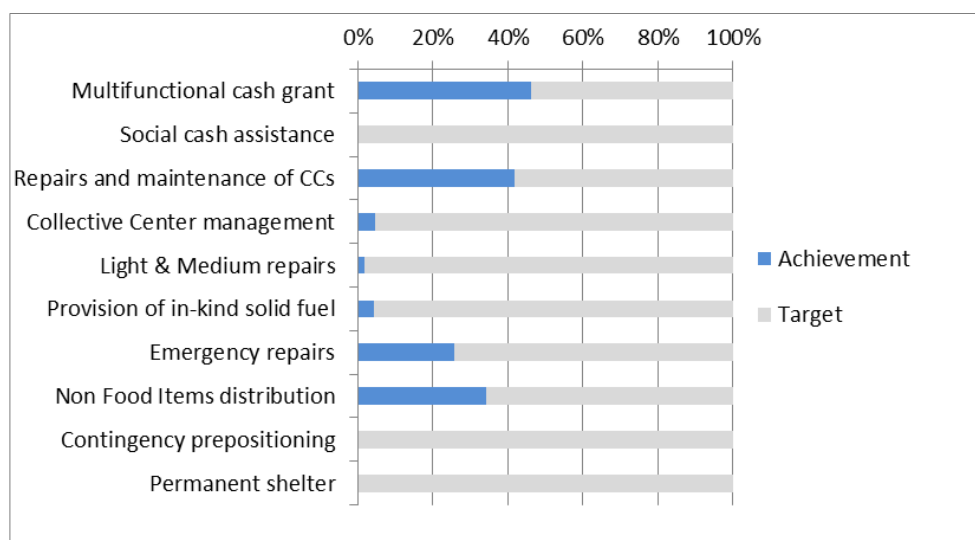
<sup>1</sup> [International Protection Considerations Related to the Developments in Ukraine – Update II](http://www.refworld.org/docid/54c639474.html)  
www.refworld.org/docid/54c639474.html

- In a case supported by UNHCR implementing partner, Crimea SOS, a General Court in Lviv published a judgment on the denial of birth registration by Ukrainian authorities of a child born in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea after annexation. The IDP child has a birth certificate issued by the Russian Federation. Despite not recognizing documents issued after annexation, the Court confirmed its competence to establish the fact of birth through various supporting documents. Considering the best interests of the child and Art. 9 of the Law on IDPs, the Court decided to recognize the fact of birth and order the registration of the child. While the exchange of information on pension payments has been established between the Russian Federation and Ukraine to avoid double payments in Crimea, no system is yet in place for exchanging information or automatic recognition of civil registration documents between the two countries. The Presidential administration has been lobbying for such a procedure to be introduced, however the Ministry of Justice has been reluctant to adopt it, resulting in numerous court cases.
- A City Court in Rivne gave a decision in a case supported by a UNHCR partner on the denial of registration as an IDP by the local Department of Social Protection based on the absence of a registration stamp in the applicant’s passport. The court considered other documentary evidence, such as entrepreneurial certificate, documentation on registration of business, payments of taxes, witness statements and medical documents. The Court based its decision on international and domestic law on non-discrimination and freedom of movement and declared the denial of registration unlawful and discriminatory. The court obliged the Department of Social Protection to issue the applicant with an IDP certificate.
- Following a Participatory Assessment exercise run by UNHCR Sub-Office in Dnipropetrovsk, the results have been presented to partners, the Government and IDPs at an open forum on 24 April. Presentation of the findings will be used in local advocacy. The Participatory Assessment with IDPs was aimed at gathering accurate information on specific protection risks faced by IDPs, underlying causes and to hear their proposed solutions. Participatory Assessment Workshops and exercises have also been run by UNHCR Field Offices in Kharkiv, Sievierodonetsk, Mariupol and Donetsk, with the presentation of results expected shortly. In total 150 Focus Group Discussions have taken place with more than 1,200 participants.

## Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

### Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR has prepared the first release of the Cash Assistance Post-distribution Monitoring (2014-2015) [report](#) that covers findings of five partners that have already completed the monitoring exercise. The document will be updated once more partners complete the monitoring exercise.
- A REACH assessment supporting Shelter Cluster activity has been approved. Teams will be dispatched on the ground very soon with the objective of collecting quantitative data to establish a baseline of IDP shelter living conditions.
- In the first quarter of 2015, Shelter Cluster members successfully implemented the Multifunctional Cash Grant, repairs and maintenance of Collective Centers, emergency repairs and distribution of Non Food Items. Light and medium repairs were slow to start mainly due to the time consuming procurement procedure. Collective Center management, mostly local NGOs, suffered lack of funding. Seasonal operations such as solid fuel distribution had not begun; they are linked to winterization 2015-16. Despite a reduced target and increased interest, no donors or Cluster members began permanent shelter projects.



Humanitarian Response Plan implementation, Q1 2015

## Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR has provided NFI assistance to 2,500 people in government controlled areas: 1,500 people in Mariupol, Donetsk region were provided with bedding and clothing and a further 1,000 people in Novoaidar and Starobilsk, Luhansk region, were provided with bedding. In Shchastya, a heavily shelled town in Luhansk region, 200 roofing panels were distributed in the city to repair the many roofs.
- In non-government controlled areas, the first UNHCR convoy carrying NFIs to Luhansk city arrived on 14 April, following a request from Luhansk Red Cross Society. UNHCR distributed 23,500 m<sup>2</sup> of emergency shelter tarpaulin as well as blankets and clothes to some 1,750 people. A second truck arrived on 24 April with bedding sets and blankets for 1,500 people.

## Working in partnership

The humanitarian response to the internal displacement situation in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by international organizations, the Government, local and international NGOs.

Key Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster partners: [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Caritas Ukraine](#) | [Chesna i Svyata Kraina](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Donbas reconstruction and development agency](#) | [Dopomoga Dnipro](#) | [HIA Hungary](#) | [IOM](#) | [Mercy Corps](#) | [Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Communal Living](#) | [Ministry of Social Policy](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Save the Children UK](#) | [Save Ukraine Organization](#) | [State Emergency Service](#) | [Ukrainian Red Cross Society](#) | [UNDP](#) | [Vostok SOS](#) | [World Jewish Relief](#)

Key Protection Cluster partners: [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Crimean Diaspora](#) | [ICRC](#) | [IOM](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [OCHA](#) | [OHCHR \(HRMMU\)](#) | [OSCE](#) | [State Migration Service of Ukraine](#) | [The Right to Protection](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

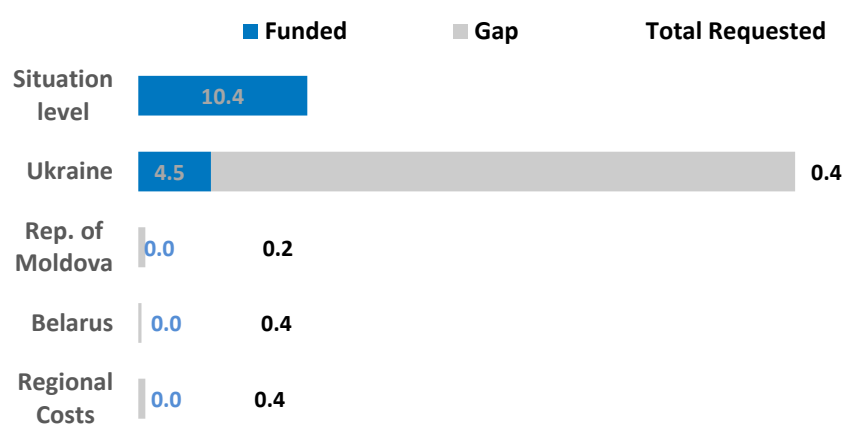
## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have already indicated a contribution to UNHCR's 2015 activities with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR's total financial requirement in 2015 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 41.5 million**, as presented in the [Supplementary Appeal](#). This covers UNHCR's financial needs for providing protection and assistance to those displaced by the conflict inside Ukraine, as well as those externally displaced in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova. Contributions recorded so far represented **36 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

### Donors who have contributed: Funding (in million USD)

- Canada
- Denmark
- Estonia
- European Union
- Finland
- Germany
- Italy
- Private Donors
- United States of America

A total of **14.9 million** has been contributed



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