

UKRAINE

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

20 January – 9 February 2016

KEY FIGURES

57,300

People receiving UNHCR
winterization assistance

USD 6.1 million

winterization budget

34,100

tonnes of heating coal or m³ wood

29

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) across
Ukraine currently implemented

FUNDING

USD 34.8 million

requested for the operation in 2016

Gap
100%

PRIORITIES

- Leading the Protection and Shelter/NFI Clusters.
- Supporting the Government of Ukraine on IDP and refugee/asylum issues.
- Advocacy on freedom of movement, humanitarian access, and other concerns.
- Provision of humanitarian assistance, especially around the line of contact and NGCA.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** Following a period of improved security conditions, the situation is again deteriorating, with increased fighting taking place on the line of contact and continued tension throughout eastern Ukraine.
- **Protection concerns:** Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains a primary concern. Access to adequate housing for internally displaced people (IDPs) is also an ongoing concern.
- **Legislation update:** A law strengthening guarantees of rights and freedoms of IDPs' came into effect including removal of the need for IDPs to extend their registration certificate every six months.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 20 January, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 2,000 people.



Aleksandr is chopping the firewood next to his house in the line of contact in Syze, Luhansk region. The village is located in the pocket between the line of contact and the border with Russia and has only 11 houses and 17 residents. It is surrounded by fields which are contaminated with hidden landmines. The small community rarely leaves the village due to sporadic hostilities in the area and bad roads. The only bus service connecting the village with a nearby district center was suspended last year. Due to the risk from landmines, people are no longer able to gather firewood in the nearby forest to heat their homes and to cook. In early January UNHCR delivered several truckloads of coal and firewood along with warm clothes to help the community to survive the winter. *Photo: UNHCR/John Wendle/January 2015/Syze/Luhansk region*

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The security situation in eastern Ukraine has deteriorated during the past few weeks, following a period of relative calm during the winter holidays. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission [reports](#) ceasefire violations, including increased use of weapons prohibited under the terms of the Addendum to the Package of Measures. While the fighting remains concentrated near to Horlivka, Donetsk airport and Debaltsevo on the line of contact in Donetsk region, the overall situation in eastern Ukraine remains tense.

Freedom of movement across the line of contact continues to be a most pressing concern, particularly in light of the worsening security situation which has led to the closure of some crossing points and increased queues at those that remain open. Conditions at crossing points remain difficult as people crossing the line of contact face long waits in cold temperatures while their papers are checked. A pass system initiated in January 2015 with the introduction of the Temporary Order on Movement remains in place. The system was improved with the launch of an electronic pass system in July. The State Security Service announced that the validity of previously issued paper passes with an expiration date of 31 December 2015 would be automatically extended, however, there have been some reports of people being denied permission to cross the line of contact with these passes. Recently de facto authorities in Donetsk have begun “customs” type activities, registering passport details in a database, inspecting luggage and goods and collecting taxes. This process has led to further restrictions and delays on crossing the line of contact. Conditions at crossing points are also hazardous due to the presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW), such as landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) which contaminates areas near to the line of contact.

The situation in villages near the line of contact remains particularly difficult due to continued insecurity and poor socio-economic conditions. Most people of working age have no livelihood opportunities. Access to social assistance is difficult as government services are suspended, requiring people to travel in order to receive social assistance, including medical care. People living near the line of contact lack access to administrative and legal services as well as information on social entitlements. Transport connections are often unreliable or non-existent as transport companies refuse to operate in some areas due to difficulty of access caused by the presence of checkpoints. Poor transport connections mean that some children attend school infrequently.

Humanitarian access to non-government controlled Donetsk remains limited for UN agencies while the issue of ‘registration’ is still pending. UNHCR continues to conduct activities through partners, including monitoring, meeting with different partners and implementation of small-scale community based projects and Quick Impact Projects (QIPs).

As the situation in Ukraine enters its third year, for many displacement is becoming a long-term prospect. Housing solutions for IDPs are difficult to find, as affordable quality housing is in short supply. Many IDPs stay with host families, volunteers and in private accommodation, though affordable private accommodation is often in poor condition. The most vulnerable displaced often end up living in collective centres, which are intended for short-term transit accommodation. At present, there are around 300 such collective centres housing some 14,000 people. In 2015, relocation of IDPs to alternative housing allowed 23 collective centres to be closed.

External Displacement

UNHCR continues to monitor the refugee situation in neighbouring countries. According to government sources in receiving countries, the total number of Ukrainians seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries now stands at 1,074,800, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (942,900) and Belarus (126,800).

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that total cross-border traffic again decreased at both checkpoints during the reporting period, from 8,469 to 8,053 per day. There was a daily average net flow of 57 people going to the Russian Federation from Ukraine. This continues the trend seen since the winter holidays.

As of 8 February, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries in the European Union and in neighbouring countries there were 6,540 applications for international protection in Germany, 4,665 in Poland, 6,522 in Italy, 2,532 in Sweden, 2,687 in France, 258 in Moldova, 73 in Romania, 65 in Hungary and 26 in Slovakia according to government sources in receiving countries.

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, continued to engage with protection partners in discussions on finding practical ways to carry out protection activities in the non-government controlled areas of Ukraine despite existing obstacles, including lack of 'registration' and access issues. Guidance is being developed based on inputs from different organizations and lessons learnt from other operations.
- Protection coordination meetings took place in Sievierodonetsk and Slovyansk. Issues related to freedom of movement and lack of proper implementation of recent legislation was highlighted. The Protection Cluster coordination team delivered a half-day protection mainstreaming training session for humanitarian organizations active in the Sievierodonetsk area. 25 participants attended, representing local and international NGOs as well as UN agencies covering different sectors.
- During visits to villages located in the 'grey area' in the Luhansk region, near the line of contact, communities composed mainly of older people expressed their sense of isolation, both due to separation from their families (living mainly in the non-government controlled area of Luhansk) and due to a feeling of abandonment by local authorities. Their pensions, however, continue to be paid and are delivered by mail or through other solidarity networks.
- More information on cluster activities can be found in the December 2015 [factsheet](#).

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 13 January, Law No. 921-VIII (2166) '*On making amendments to some laws of Ukraine to strengthen guarantees of rights and freedoms of IDPs*' came into effect. The amendments allow for the inclusion of foreigners and stateless people entitled to permanent residence in Ukraine in the IDP definition. The law also cancels the requirement for IDPs to extend their registration certificate every six months. The changes permit registration with evidence confirming previous permanent residence in the non-government controlled areas and places located on the line of contact within the government controlled area and removal of the residence registration stamp requirement on the IDP certificate.
- On 26 January, Law No. 2254 '*On amendments to some Laws of Ukraine on enhancement of social protection of children and assistance to families with children*' was adopted by Parliament. The law stipulates amendments to the law '*On ensuring of rights and freedoms of internally displaced people*'. The amendments envisage that applications for IDP registration may be personally submitted by children aged 14-18. Children under 14, disabled people or incapacitated people must apply for registration through a legal representative. For children under 14 unaccompanied by legal representatives or relatives, an application for registration must be filed by a representative of the custody and guardianship agency at the place of stay. For children under the care of social services, an application for registration must be filed by the head of the relevant institution. The Law obliges local executive bodies and local government to protect the rights of IDP children.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner Stantsia Kharkiv provided 1,520 general consultations, 136 legal consultations and 47 psychosocial consultations. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided 1,946 general consultations, 1,175 legal consultations and 327 psychosocial consultations. 60-70 per cent of the consultations were provided to female beneficiaries. Main concerns were access to humanitarian assistance, medical assistance, IDP rights, social counseling, social assistance, crossing the line of contact, housing, employment, children, social adaption, anxiety and depression. Between 1-31 January, UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS provided consultations to 1,298 people, of which 470 related to humanitarian assistance, 373 social consultations, 296 legal consultations and 96 for legal assistance. The most frequently raised concerns included the crossing of the line of contact and the Crimea administrative border, civil documentation, IDP registration, social payments, accommodation, distance learning for those in the non-government controlled areas and humanitarian aid.

¹ [International Protection Considerations Related to the Developments in Ukraine – Update III](http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html)
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html>

Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter Cluster led by UNHCR, provided training to 40 staff members of the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) on 21 January. The themes covered were durable shelter solutions, integration and solutions for collective centers. On 28 January, the cluster held a training session for 24 Ombudsmen to regional offices of the Ministry of Social Policy with support UNHCR partner NGO CrimeaSOS. The training focused on collective centre management and decommissioning. Both initiatives are part of a broader plan combining the forces of the UNHCR Protection Unit, clusters and the MoSP. The training sessions will be followed up with measures to reinforce the network and partnership.
- More information on cluster activities can be found in the December 2015 [factsheet](#) and the latest 3W [map](#).

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- The implementation of UNHCR's winterization plan targeting 57,300 beneficiaries is on-going, with distribution of winter NFIs, heating fuel and winter cash assistance taking place. In government controlled areas, 7,801 tonnes of coal (80 per cent of the total) have been distributed, while 10,663 m3 of firewood (94 per cent of the total) has been distributed. Kharkiv Field Office completed distribution of 8,060 m3 of firewood and 4,051 tonnes of coal to 2,831 homes. Mariupol Field Office completed distribution of 1,523 m3 of firewood and 3,046 tonnes of coal distributed to 3,050 homes. During the reporting period, Sievierodonetsk Field Office delivered winter assistance to some 1,670 homes. In non-government controlled areas, Donetsk Field Office commenced distribution of winterization coal on 14 January, with distributions to some 350 homes so far. Delivery to beneficiaries is expected to be completed in mid-February.



82 year-old Klaudia was forced to flee Avdeevka, in Donetsk, when shelling damaged her house. Like many elderly people, she is barely making ends meet with her tiny pension and disability allowances. In the harsh Ukrainian winter and with freezing temperatures Klaudia, like thousands of other displaced people, does not have sufficient savings to pay for winter clothes, blankets, heating and other items to survive the cold season. To support the most vulnerable displaced people, UNHCR provides cash assistance in Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv and Donetsk regions, intended to meet essential winter needs. Photo: UNHCR/Anatoliy Scherbyna/Mariupol/February 2016

- Winter cash distribution began on 1 February in government controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. Cash cards with a value of either UAH 6,000 (USD 231) or UAH 8,000 (USD 308) are provided depending on family size. Distributions are conducted directly by UNHCR. A total of 2,594 cards are planned for distribution.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR NFIs were provided to over 2,000 people. In the government controlled area, UNHCR Mariupol Field Office distributed NFIs to some 50 people in the Velykonovosilkivskyi district. The office provided 728 NFI kits to partner NGOs Proliska and 795 NFI kits to the Federation of Greek Communities in Ukraine for distribution. NFI kits were also distributed in the villages of Novotroitskoye, Bogdanovka and Starohnativka, located near to the line of contact. Sievierodonetsk Field Office delivered 40 bedding sets to the Regional

Tuberculosis Sanatorium for Children. In the non-government controlled area, UNHCR Luhansk Field Office distributed winter NFIs to 412 people in the village of Krasnyi Yar. A UNHCR convoy of 18 trucks arrived in Luhansk city carrying much needed shelter materials, while a convoy of four trucks arrived in Donetsk city carrying NFIs. A convoy carrying winter clothing and NFIs due to arrive in Luhansk city the coming week.

‘Water is the source of life’ project

Residents of the village of Novhorodske attend the opening ceremony for a new water pump provided by UNHCR. As a result of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, there is extensive damage to utility infrastructure. Novhorodske is one of many villages suffering water supply shortages. The new project ‘Water is the source of life’ costing over UAH 600,000 (USD 23,200) will renew water supply for some 15,000 people, both local residents and IDPs. This is one of UNHCR Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) aimed at peaceful coexistence between IDPs and host communities.

Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/K. Gryshchuk



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. UNHCR works with eight implementing partners and other partners providing assistance to internally displaced people through protection and legal assistance, policy development and capacity building and the distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items. UNHCR co-leads the Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster and co-leads the Protection Cluster.

UNHCR implementing partners (IDP operation): [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Slavic Heart](#) | [Stantia Kharkiv](#)

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 Dnipra](#) | [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](#) | [HelpAge](#) | [IOM](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [OHCHR \(HRMMU\)](#) | [OSCE](#) | [People in Need](#) | [The Right to Protection](#) | [Save the Children](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR's total financial requirement in 2016 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 34.8 million**. 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 the neighboring countries in Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation. In 2016, no contribution has been recorded so far.

Donors who have contributed: Funding (in million USD)

A total of **0** has been contributed

	Funded	Gap	Total Requested
Ukraine	0		34
Belarus	0	0.1	
The Russian Federation	0	0.08	
Rep. of Moldova	0	0.05	
Regional Costs	0	0.05	

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