

HIGHLIGHTS

- Increase in hostilities in Krasnohorivka
- Impediments deprive hundreds to access benefits
- Interrupted water supply systems affect thousands
- Preparedness efforts are scaling up
- Cash Transfer Programming reaches new levels
- Underfunding continues to pose serious threat on UN / NGO ability to deliver



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Access to health constrained for some 70,000 people

The impact of the conflict in eastern Ukraine continues to have a detrimental impact on the lives of millions of people. Ongoing hostilities continue to generate multi-sectoral needs. The rapid escalation of shelling in Krasnohorivka (Donetska oblast, Government controlled area) at the end of May 2017 affected more than 70,000 people after the Central District Hospital serving Marinskyi raion was damaged. Hostilities in the same area damaged nearly 50 houses and three schools, serving approximately 1,000 students. Local authorities were quick to begin repairing the damage. On 3 June, the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MTOT) appealed to the humanitarian community to cover critical assistance gaps. The recent spike in hostilities in Krasnohorivka has resulted in shelter and non-food items, education, health, and water, sanitation and hygiene needs. The UN and NGOs have scaled-up their response efforts and plan to support the Government through the provision of initial assistance, including construction materials and other non-food items.

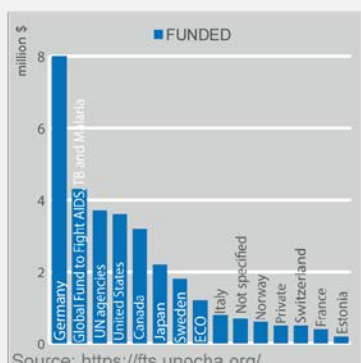
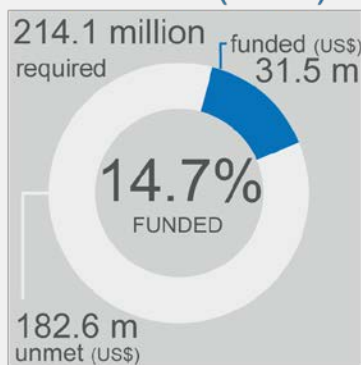
Limited access to benefits aggravate lives of most vulnerable

With the timeframe for peace uncertain, some of the most vulnerable groups of an estimated of 3.8 million people in need of urgent assistance continue to face daily hardships. Bureaucratic impediments imposed by all parties to the conflict and a lack of solutions to address some of the systematic bottlenecks restrict access to pensions and other social benefits. The elderly, female-headed households, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are struggling to claim their entitlements. Thousands more are being deprived of benefits altogether, which in many cases is their only source of income.

Since February 2016, the Government suspended social payments and pensions for some 600,000 IDPs, until they revalidate their IDP certificates. This decision has increased movement of civilians across the frontline, and affected particularly pensioners residing in non-Government controlled areas (NGCAs), who, according to the Ukrainian legislation, are forced to register as IDPs to receive their entitlements. The process includes the physical verification of IDP pensioners' housing, in addition to regular verifications at relevant responsible entities.

The verification of a pensioner's status imposed by multiple entities, including the Government's banking institute, further restricted IDPs' access to social benefits. The latest of such verification was launched in March – April 2017, resulting in widespread protection concerns. The Protection Cluster indicates that the latest verification process in 2017 alone resulted in delay or suspension of pensions to some 200,000 people, while massive queues at checkpoints and bank branches aggravated health conditions of vulnerable pensioners. Different practices were observed by different or sometimes the same entities in different locations. Protection Cluster monitoring indicates that Pension Fund and Social Policy departments in various raions in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA) applied a range of ad-hoc approaches to reinstate pensions or verify IDP statuses.

FUNDING (2017)



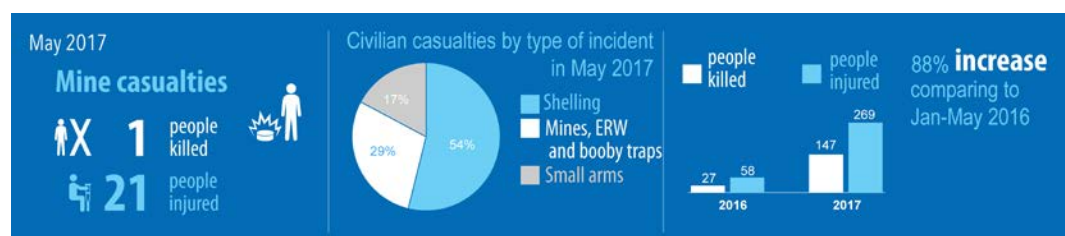
Number of casualties among the civilian population is rising as insecurity continues

Lives are lost and humanitarian suffering continues, as conflict becomes a protracted crisis

The humanitarian situation in Ukraine is no longer in the headlines. While there has been no major escalation in hostilities since late January - February 2017, daily clashes continue to claim civilian lives and cause damage in both GCA and NGCA despite repeated ceasefire agreements. The latest temporary arrangement dated 1 June also did not last long with light and heavy weaponry use still widespread, according to initial reports.

In May 2017, OHCHR recorded 76 civilian casualties (eight deaths, 68 injuries). This is an increase of 8 per cent compared to the previous month (70 civilian casualties, including 13 deaths and 57 injuries). Casualties caused by shelling tripled (five killed and 36 injured compared to 13 injured in April) and accounted for 54 per cent of all casualties. At the same time, 13 casualties (two deaths, 11 injuries) were caused by small arms fire and light weapons. Incidents related to mines, explosive remnants of war and booby traps accounted for 29 per cent of civilian casualties (one death and 21 injuries).

OHCHR estimates the total number of civilians killed during the whole conflict period (from 14 April 2014 to 5 June 2017) to be over 2,000 (including at least 137 children). The number of conflict-related civilian injuries for the same period is estimated at 7,000-9,000. Behind these figures are the ordinary Ukrainian families, who have been bearing the heaviest brunt and brutal consequences of the conflict.



Protecting housing and critical civilian infrastructure is essential

International humanitarian law, humanitarian and human rights principles must be respected by all parties to the conflict

The indiscriminate shelling of houses and critical civilian infrastructure on which millions rely is resulting in increasing humanitarian needs. According to humanitarian partners operating close to the 'contact line', in May 2017, more than 230 houses were damaged, resulting in additional shelter and early recovery needs. These incidents occurred in multiple locations in both GCA and NGCA.

Access to safe education continues to be hampered by hostilities

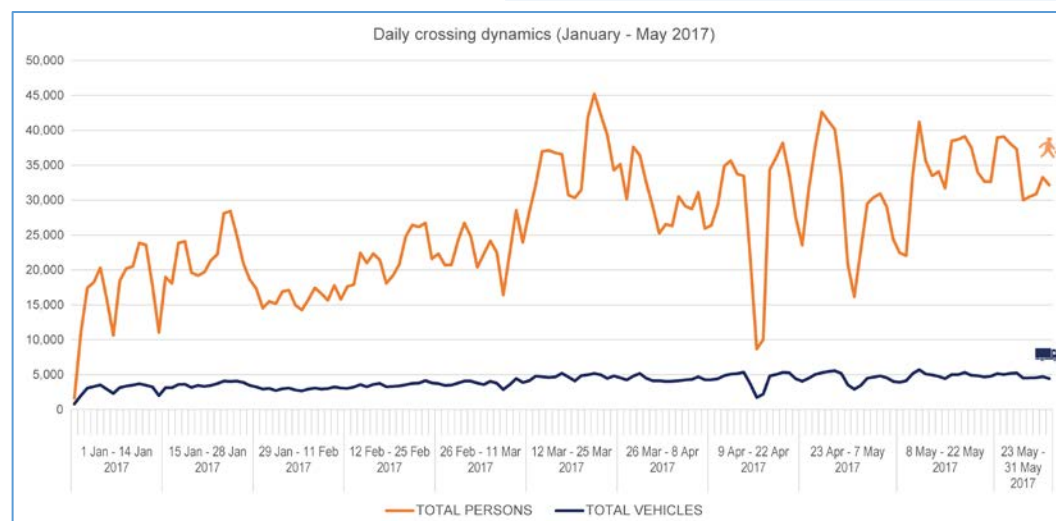
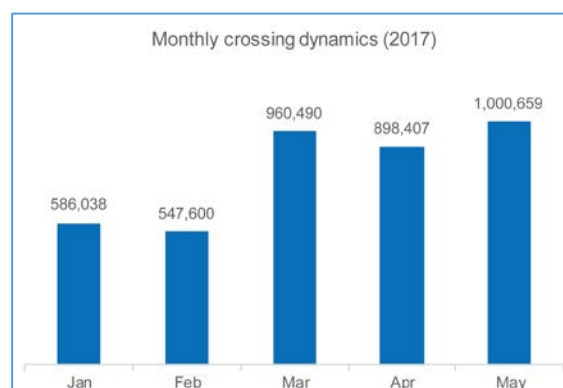
Of particular concern is the continuous shelling reported near educational and health facilities. On 17 May, a sports school in Marinka (Donetska oblast, GCA) was shelled, resulting in an emergency evacuation of around 140 children. On 24 May, shelling occurred close to a school in the same location forcing students to take cover in bomb shelters. According to local authorities, the school was substantially damaged and resources have been allocated to start repairs. In May alone, five educational facilities were damaged in GCA, while three similar unverified cases were reported in NGCA. In 2017, the Education Cluster recorded at least 23 educational facilities damaged as a result of ongoing hostilities, which affected more than 3,000 children. This number excludes unverified cases of shelling, temporary closures and damages to non-functional schools. Access to safe and quality education continues to be hampered.

Despite insecurity, checkpoints crossings reach a record high in May

Combat activities in and around all five operational Exit/Entrance Checkpoints (EECPs) continue to hinder civilians' freedom of movement. While individual crossings at all the checkpoints have increased significantly in May (over one million individual crossings comparing to 898,407 in April), the worsening trend of security incidents at or nearby the checkpoints recorded throughout 2017 remains of concern. At least two cases of shelling were recorded in May near the EECPs located in Hnutove and Marinka during operational

Individual crossings at all the checkpoints have increased significantly in May

hours. These incidents resulted in suspension of operations for several hours. In addition, inadequate conditions at all checkpoints exacerbate humanitarian and protection concerns, despite increased activities of partners to upgrade these EECPs. However, the introduction of extended (summer) hours of operations at all checkpoints is a welcome development, effective of 1 June 2017, from 06:00 till 20:00 hours.



Access to safe water remains extremely challenging

The WASH Cluster reports of at least 15 incidents recorded in May, comparing to four in April

Shelling of inter-connected critical electricity and water facilities in both GCA and NGCA is reported on a daily basis throughout May. The WASH Cluster reports of at least 15 incidents recorded in May, comparing to four in April. While repair teams risked their lives to restore the damaged infrastructure, insecurity and the presence of mines delay the efforts, often for days. In addition to shelling, obsolete water supply infrastructure compounded the needs of thousands. For example, on 4 May, Popasnyanskyi Vodocanal (PVK) stopped water supply to NGCA reportedly due to a broken pipe or air valve near Zolote (Luhansk GCA). The PVK reported lack of funds to complete repair works, hindering access to safe drinking water for some 460,000 people, mainly in NGCA. Irregular water cuts, rationed water supply or use of limited reserves were among the interim measures to address water shortage.

At the same time, despite many calls, issue of non-payment of bills between the entities in GCA and NGCA has not been resolved, although WASH Cluster reports of some payment made by NGCA to PVK at the end of May. Such complications surrounding the energy and water supply system across the 'contact line' continue to pose serious threat to access to basic services of millions.

Linking ongoing response to preparedness

Need to raise levels of preparedness is critical, as likelihood for increased humanitarian situation is high

Multiple factors contributing to the risk of rapid deterioration of humanitarian situation persist. Volatility of overall security situation, possible escalation of hostilities near the heavily industrialized areas (mines, metallurgy, chemical, energy production, waste landfills, slag heaps, etc.) and large-scale impact of ongoing challenges with access to water are some of the elements. Partners continue scaling up preparedness efforts to enable capacities to respond to such complex scenario. Key clusters started to work on the revision of existing contingency plans, including the inter-agency one. One of the major

changes expected in this process is the significant focus paid to a compound crisis, driven by both environmental and water-related risks.

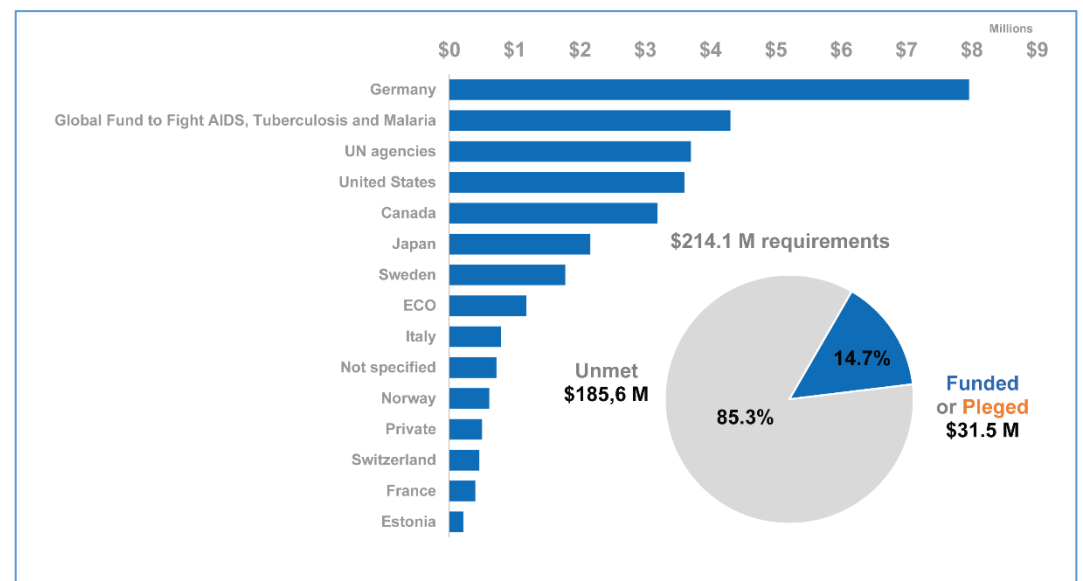
On 26 May, the Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MTOT) convened a meeting between key Government entities and the international partners to discuss the complexities of environmental issues and define ways to reduce risks of large-scale humanitarian impact. The meeting called for stronger collaboration in finding urgent measures to identify existing challenges and develop detailed action plan. As an immediate action, the Cabinet of Ministers requested to form an inter-agency working group on “ecological and environmental issues in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts”. A broad range of stakeholders, including central and local authorities, as well as international community are expected to be part of the working group.

To support and contribute to overall preparedness process, the Government of Switzerland seconded two environmental experts who arrived to Ukraine on 29 May on a three months’ mission. The mission is to analyse existing and impending environmental risks contributing to a solid understanding of existing conditions, risks and challenges in the heavily-industrialised eastern region of Ukraine.

Funding is critically low, as partners stretch resources to meet needs

Humanitarian partners’ readiness and commitment to operate under multifaceted challenges, including shrinking humanitarian space, limited access and ongoing hostilities, is severely hampered by underfunding. With only US\$ 31.5 million received at the end of May of the requested \$214 million (14.7 per cent), many partners have exhausted resources in the first five months of the year to respond to multi-sectoral life-saving needs.

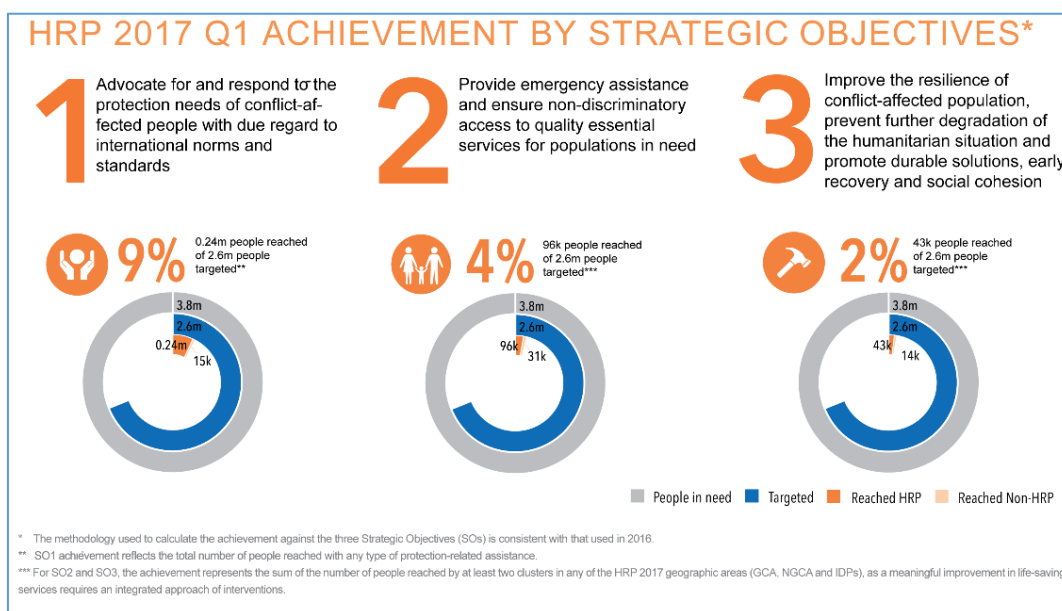
Underfunding leads to cessation of some critical Logistics capacities, while two NGOs have already terminated operations



Some of the critical activities that could potentially be halted due to lack of funding include provision of assistance in Protection, Shelter/NFI and WASH. Such underfunding aggravates the lives of millions of people, who are dependent on aid to survive. Funding is a critical element in alleviating people’s suffering as a consequence of the four-year long conflict. Partners remain committed as ever to join efforts to deliver, but such significant underfunding is a detrimental factor.

Number of partners experiencing lack of resources increase. In 2017 alone, due to lack of funding, two international NGOs ceased their operations in Ukraine. At the same time, some of the critical capacities of the Logistics Cluster are at stake. The Cluster’s human resources capacities will be reduced significantly in the coming months, while arrangements will have to be agreed on continuation of critical crossline activities that the Cluster has been facilitating in support of the wider humanitarian community.

To ensure effective use of available resources, record and recognize the contributions, an appeal has been made to donors and partners to reflect contributions pledged, disbursed and received at <https://fts.unocha.org>.



On 30 May, partners concluded an [analysis](#) of performance of the first quarter of the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). One fourth of the year is behind, and the three HRP Strategic Objectives achieved only an average of five per cent of their targets. For ordinary people, this means inability to enjoy their rights, limited to no access to adequate basic services, including food, health, shelter, water and sanitation support, as well as erosion of the already over-stretched coping mechanisms.

In addition, on 1 June, HCT issued the annual report on the achievements under the [2016 HRP](#). Similarly, throughout the year, humanitarian partners with above 30 per cent funding reached only 1.7 million of people, majority of whom were in accessible areas, while over 1.1 million people did not receive the much-needed assistance in 2016 to live with minimum dignity. Meanwhile, a large portion of the targeted population, where needs were more acute, were not reached due to access restriction, insecurity or bureaucratic impediments, which prevented partners' delivery to scale, despite sustained advocacy.

However, regardless of challenges, partners continue to deliver aid stretching resources and applying, where necessary more pragmatic approaches. For example, the Logistics Cluster facilitated delivery of over 235 metric tons of humanitarian assistance (mainly shelter materials) to two oblasts in NGCA. Assistance by other clusters also reached people in need in wide spectrum of sectors, including education, health, food, livelihoods and shelter and WASH. Also, on 25 May, the Russian Federation reportedly dispatched 65th convoy to Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (NGCA), with some 500 tonnes of humanitarian assistance (namely food rations for children and medical supplies).

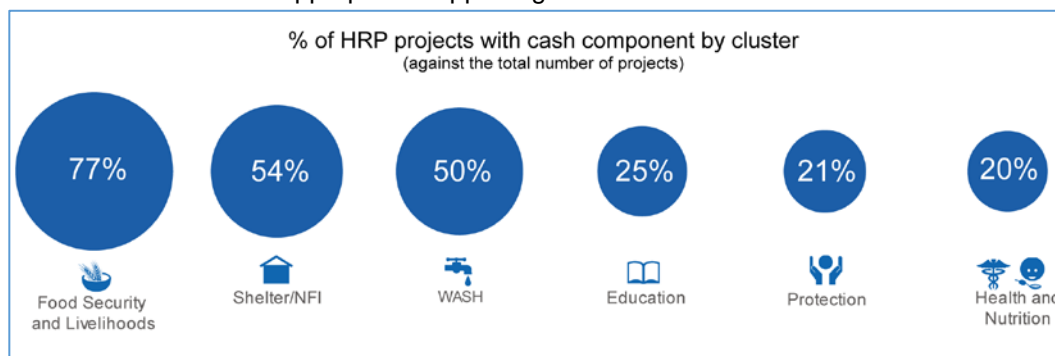
Grand Bargain Goals: increase in cash-transfer programming (CTP), localised response and building resilience

Response efforts consist of both in-kind and cash-based interventions. Ukraine was one of the pilot countries that included the Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC) as a separate budget line in the HRP. A short analysis of the 2017 HRP indicates that the use of cash transfer programming (CTP) has significantly increased from 25 per cent in 2016 to 42 per cent in 2017. Over 40 per cent of response efforts have adopted an in-cash modality in delivering assistance.

This significant increase is attributable to several factors, including functioning of effective markets (GCA), beneficiaries' preference for cash-based transfers and continued advocacy for use of cash-based transfers where appropriate. On 31 May, the Humanitarian Coordinator joined a panel of actors in the DFID-WFP workshop on the Grand Bargain work-stream to present Ukraine's learning and experience on delivering cash at a larger

Ukraine leads way in implementing key Grand Bargain commitments - a major outcome of 2016 World Humanitarian Summit

scale as per the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) commitment. However, integration and use of cash-based interventions are limited in NGCA due to access constraints and lack of appropriate supporting infrastructure.



At the same time, partners' efforts to advance in cooperation with local authorities to build on existing structures are ongoing, linking development where possible with ongoing humanitarian efforts and localising response mechanisms. This has yielded multiple results, as local authorities and organizations in GCAs are now better able to lead local coordination. They are also better positioned to identify the context-driven linkages for development and relief efforts to come together. Overall, there is a positive indication of opportunities for humanitarian and development partners to continue building capacities and linking development and relief efforts as part of the global and country-level commitments. However, similar challenges with funding continue to jeopardize this window of opportunity.

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