

THE PROTECTION CLUSTER INCLUDES SUB-CLUSTERS ON CHILD PROTECTION, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND MINE ACTION



PROTECTION CONCERNS

- **Security situation:** OHCHR recorded 46 conflict-related civilian casualties: 13 killed and 33 injured, which represents a 142% increase compared with March 2018. Mines, booby traps and ERW accounted for 33% of casualties.
- **Freedom of movement:** On April 23, a man died while crossing the contact line at the Stanytsia Luhanska checkpoint. Due to the absence of an ambulance at the checkpoint, the man could not receive life-saving assistance.
- **Legislative developments:** On April 30, the Joint Forces Operation began in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk GCA. As a result, the authority of military personnel has significantly increased, there is increased restriction on movement due to restricted zones and areas which are closed-off to non-residents, and the military use of civilian housing and other property is allowed 'in cases of extreme urgency'.
- **HLP rights:** Owners of land contaminated by mines and UXOs still have to pay land tax even though their land is unusable for agriculture or animal husbandry and therefore does not provide an income. There is no legal mechanism for recognizing the land as inaccessible and therefore tax-free.
- **Access to mental health and psychosocial support:** Lack of mental health and psychosocial support services is a key gap in rural areas, particularly near the contact line. Partners have reported a suicide and two attempted suicides involving men of working age residing in villages along the contact line in Donetsk GCA.
- **Access to social benefits and pensions:** Oschadbank plans to close a number of branches in rural areas. This will affect access to bank services for IDPs who are required to undergo verification procedures at Oschadbank and can only receive their pensions at this bank.
- **Access to basic services:** Vodafone mobile network signal was restored in NGCA on April 28 2018, following the visit of the company's employees to NGCA, which was facilitated by OSCE SMM. However, it has since been interrupted again.

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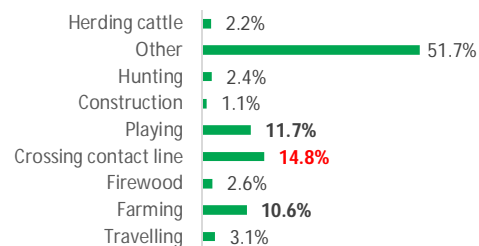
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Civilian Mine/ERW casualties disaggregated by activity* (May 2014 - April 2018)



Source: The HALO Trust

*When information is available

HIGHLIGHTS

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- Protection Cluster partner in Donetsk NGCA provided **protection counselling and information support to 660 persons**, including pensioners, IDPs, and returnees.
- As result of intervention by NGO Proliska, a school bus was launched from Vodyane village to the school in Ugledar (Donetsk GCA), which allowed children to attend school for the first time since January.
- Polish Humanitarian Action provided **562 multipurpose cash grants** to IDPs in Avdiivka, Yasynuvatskiy and Bakhmutskiy rayon of Donetsk region and in Zaporizhzhia region.
- NRC **provided legal counselling to 1,551 people**, out of whom 27% reside in NGCA. Mobile teams provided assistance in villages at the contact line and at checkpoints in Maiorske and Stanytsya Luhanska.
- In April, the **national 24/7 hotline for GBV survivors received 2,055 calls**. Survivors received, psychological and legal consultations and the hotline reported 1,076 GBV cases, of which 37% were attributed to sexual and physical violence.
- UNFPA/UFPH psychosocial support mobile teams provided **targeted assistance to 730 GBV survivors**, including 96 IDPs, in conflict-affected Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

ADVOCACY

- On April 4, Protection Cluster jointly with Mine Action Sub-Cluster **organized International Mine Awareness Day in Kyiv** to raise awareness of the deadly consequences of mines and showcase the efforts of the government and international and national actors on mine-clearance, demining, marking and mine-risk education.
- On April 12 and 26, OHCHR jointly with DRC and NRC organized two public discussions in Mariupol and Sievierodonetsk on **current challenges for protection of Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) rights of conflict-affected people**.
- On April 19, NRC organized a round table in Kramatorsk on **'Problematic issues of civil documentation in the context of the conflict in eastern Ukraine'** to discuss with local government representatives positive changes in administrative procedures for birth and death registration and other procedures for issuing civil documentation to NGCA residents.
- R2P and five civil society organizations sent a letter to the Prime Minister of Ukraine requesting amendments to the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution 637 by expanding the list of bank institutions where IDPs can obtain social benefits and pensions and undergo physical verification. Currently, IDPs can receive social benefits and pensions only through Oschadbank.
- In April, ACCESS and the NGO Forum organized an interactive exhibition in Kyiv City Council to mark the fourth anniversary since the beginning of the conflict. The photos highlighted specific issues related to entry-exit of goods through the line of contact amidst the continuing conflict.

TRAININGS/EVENTS

- DRC conducted a training **on ensuring children's rights in situations of armed conflict** for 27 officers of the civil-military cooperation unit of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (CIMIC).
- NGO CIVIC delivered a **training session on protection of civilians in conflict** at the National Defense University for 25 military trainees as a part of the course on civil-military cooperation.
- HelpAge International conducted a training in Kyiv on **Minimum Standards for Age and Disability Inclusion in humanitarian action** for 13 staff members of one local and one international NGO.

KEY FIGURES ON THE PROTECTION RESPONSE IN 2018

