

EMERGENCY SITUATION REPORT

WHO COUNTRY OFFICE IN UKRAINE

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Rebuilding hope: WHO's modular health-care units restore services in recently retaken oblasts

WHO has set up eight modular units to serve as primary health-care facilities in recently retaken areas in three oblasts. These units can be installed in just 1–2 weeks, each equipped with primary health-care examination rooms, a waiting area, and bathrooms. They serve as the first point of contact for patients with chronic diseases and elderly people, and are used during vaccination campaigns, among other services. The units can accommodate 1–4 doctors, along with other medical staff, offering prevention, care, and treatment at primary health-care level.

These facilities play a critical role, especially in regions where previous health-care facilities were destroyed. Not only do they restore essential health services, but they also rekindle a sense of community. In areas scarred by devastation, these modular units are symbols of hope and renewal, making residents feel valued and remembered.

Anna Karpova, a 60-year-old from Hrakove, articulated this sentiment, saying: “After our village was bombed, news of the modular clinic gave us hope. It meant we weren’t forgotten. Now, we have access to outpatient care and specialized doctors right here. Given our transportation challenges, this facility has been a godsend.”

Especially for older people, who tend to remain in the village, these modular units bridge a vital gap, especially if the closest health-care facilities are far away and difficult to access. For the safety of the health-care workers and patients, WHO ensures that a protective shelter is either available nearby or provided when setting up the units.



© WHO (Prefab)



© WHO (Entrance to the Shelter)

Rabies: the imperative of collaboration and education

Globally, rabies claims approximately 59 000 lives annually. Its transmission through various animals, such as dogs, bats, and wild species, poses a significant challenge to containment. Prevention, particularly through strategic vaccination drives, is pivotal.

The journey to eradicate rabies is fraught with challenges, including widespread lack of awareness, limited resources, inconsistent health-care systems, and disruptions from wars. Compounding these issues are uncertainties regarding the available stock of rabies vaccines and current outbreak statuses.

A crucial step in tackling these obstacles was the Rabies Conference held in Lviv, Ukraine, on 18–19 October 2023, under the theme “Collaborate, Educate, Eliminate”. Attended by 120 delegates, including medical professionals, epidemiologists, hunters, volunteers, and international experts, the conference provided an actionable roadmap and emphasized a comprehensive approach and global partnerships.

“The collaboration of influential organizations like WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is pivotal in supporting Ukraine’s fight against rabies,” said Oleksandr Revnivitsev, FAO National Field Assessment Coordinator.

Strengthening partnerships between governments, international entities, and nongovernmental organizations is crucial. Such collective efforts can consolidate resources and expertise, bolstering the fight against rabies. In parallel, prioritizing education is essential to ensure that communities are informed about prevention, timely treatment, and responsible pet ownership.

It is fundamental to support vaccination campaigns in high-risk areas. These initiatives can build herd immunity and break the chain of transmission. In countries like Ukraine, collaborative endeavours are being realized through field missions, pilot projects, and technical assistance. Investing in advanced diagnostic tools and surveillance systems is anticipated to enhance early detection and monitoring of rabies. Engagement of communities equipped with comprehensive information is vital to the global mission against rabies.

“This conference, the largest of the One Health projects, succeeded in bringing together numerous experts. It enabled us to address challenges and explore solutions. The presence of over 100 participants highlights the collective commitment to combating rabies in Ukraine,” remarked Olena Kuriata, One Health consultant at the WHO Country Office in Ukraine.

While eradicating rabies presents multiple challenges, the path forward is clear—through collaboration, education, and strategic implementation, solutions are within reach.



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Integrating HIV services into primary health care in Ukraine: addressing gender-based violence

Ukraine, with the second-highest prevalence of HIV in the WHO European Region, faces a significant health challenge. The epidemic predominantly affects people who inject drugs (20.5%), sex workers (3.1%), and men who have sex with men (3.9%). Compounded by the war, the health-care system is under duress, and the risks of gender-based violence (GBV) have escalated. Two thirds of Ukrainian women have experienced violence, with areas of active hostilities seeing a surge in war-related sexual violence.



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There's a concerning link between GBV and increased HIV susceptibility. WHO research shows that abused women are 1.5 times more likely to contract HIV. In 2022, the Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health (MoH) of Ukraine (UPHC) revealed that in the Chernihiv oblast, 30% of people living with HIV were unaware of their condition. The 2019 National HIV Testing Strategy facilitated testing for 50 000 people in Chernihiv by 2022, detecting a 0.6% prevalence rate. Early diagnosis and prompt antiretroviral therapy (ART) are critical in HIV management.



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With support from international bodies like WHO and collaboration with the UPHC, Ukraine is committed to integrating HIV services into primary care. The focus is on post-exposure prophylaxis for GBV survivors, expanded HIV testing for high-risk groups, pre-exposure prophylaxis, and prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission.

Initiatives designed to empower health-care workers this subject include trainings in Chernihiv, Odesa, Lviv, and Kharkiv; ongoing sessions in Ivano-Frankivsk; and upcoming workshops in Kirovohrad and Cherkasy on 9–10 and 15–16 November, respectively. The participants learn to provide comprehensive services for GBV survivors, ensure prophylaxis for occupational injuries, administer pre-exposure prophylaxis, conduct HIV testing, and implement preventive measures for pregnant women to prevent transmission of HIV, hepatitis B, and syphilis. These trainings also enhance the capacity to deliver a full package of HIV services in regions, which includes estimating demand for HIV test kits and ART. WHO offers the participants a user-friendly MS Excel tool to calculate HIV test kit needs and assess testing coverage at facility level.

KEY FIGURES

Key humanitarian numbers



1311

Attacks on Health Care
reported by WHO SSA tool



14 600 000

People in need



7 800 000

People targeted by Health Cluster partners



5 088 000

Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

Outbreak of viral hepatitis A in the Vinnytsya region

The WHO Country Office in Ukraine is supporting the MoH of Ukraine in responding to a hepatitis A outbreak in the Vinnytsya region. Between 16 and 30 October, 231 cases were reported, of which 189 were laboratory-confirmed, affecting 199 adults and 32 children from Vinnytsya and nearby cities. The patients were moderately ill, with some receiving care at Vinnytsya hospitals.

The Regional Center for Disease Prevention and Control (OCDC) is coordinating the outbreak response under the MoH's guidance. A stock of 13 000 hepatitis A vaccines is available to be mobilized by the Vinnytsya OCDC. The response strategy encompasses epidemiological surveillance, case management, infection prevention and control, and environmental investigations to trace the source of contamination, particularly in food and water. Risk communication is also a crucial component of these efforts.

Between 17 and 30 October, 273 water samples from public sources, private wells, and distribution points were tested. Ninety-eight tested positive for hepatitis A in polymerase chain reaction tests, of which 97 meet state sanitary standards.

A rapid needs assessment in hospitals and the OCDC prompted WHO to procure and deliver medicines, consumables, laboratory reagents, and biocides. Collaborating with UNICEF, WHO supported regional authorities in developing and implementing a risk communication and community engagement strategy, focusing on preventing diarrhoeal disease. To this end, 4000 leaflets on food and water safety and diarrhoeal disease prevention were distributed to the Vinnytsya OCDC for public awareness raising. Another 19 000 will be delivered to the centers for disease prevention and control in neighbouring oblasts.



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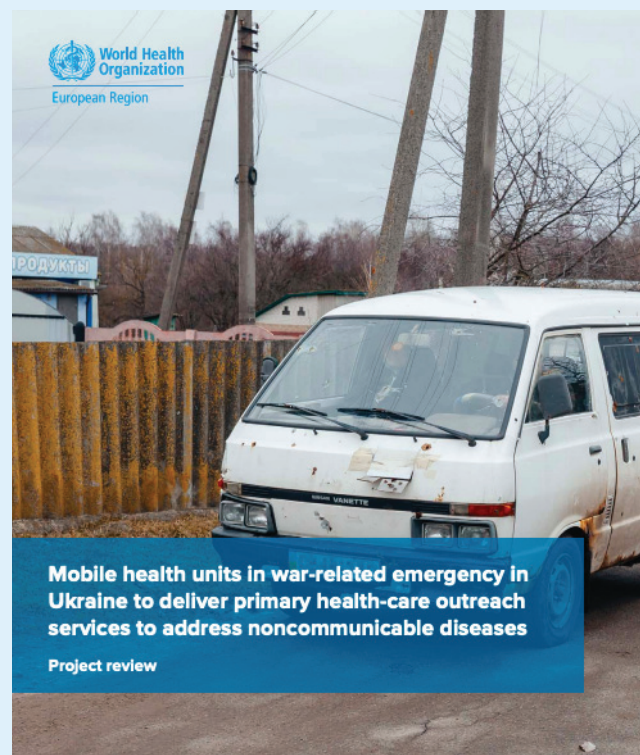


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Primary health-care outreach services to address noncommunicable diseases

A groundbreaking project aimed at improving access to health-care services and medicines for noncommunicable diseases in the war-affected regions of Ukraine has been launched. This initiative supports the primary health-care (PHC) system through mobile health units, a collaboration between the MoH and the Academy of Family Medicine of Ukraine.

From June to November 2022, the mobile units provided outreach consultations to approximately 17 000 PHC facilities across seven Ukrainian regions. Predominantly serving people aged 40 years and older, who comprised 89% of the consultations, the outreach was particularly beneficial for women, who accounted for 64% of patients.



©WHO. Mobile health units in war-related emergency in Ukraine to deliver primary health-care outreach services to address noncommunicable diseases: [project review](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional office for Europe, 2023

World Health Summit 2023 in Berlin

The World Health Summit 2023 in Berlin (#WHS2023), co-hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services and WHO, brought together global leaders to discuss health system resilience, drawing on international experiences and underscoring lessons from Ukraine.

Key insights included the need to integrate recovery with emergency response to build preparedness and reduce impacts from long-term crises. The discussion emphasized the role of health-care services in building community trust and increasing access, crucial for leaving no one behind.



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[Priorities for health system recovery in Ukraine](#)

The summit highlighted the importance of smart investment in recovery and transforming health systems towards universal health coverage for better crisis preparedness. Proper coordination and transparent allocation of resources were also found to be essential for aid effectiveness.

#WHS2023 served as a platform for leaders to reflect on past experiences and strategies for stronger health systems. The session is now available [here](#)

Mental Health Forum

On the 18th of October 2023, Dr Jarno Habicht, WHO Ukraine Representative, inaugurated the first-ever Mental Health Forum, alongside Vice Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk, Minister of Health Viktor Liashko, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine Denise Brown, and Acting Deputy Mission Director of USAID Ukraine Jeffrey Lehrer.



©WHO
Mental Health Forum.

Organized by WHO and the Coordination Center for Mental Health, the event brought together over 300 in-person participants and more than 1000 virtual participants from diverse sectors, providing a platform for them to share global best practices, exchange knowledge, and develop intersectoral strategies on mental health protection.

KEY FIGURES

Key operational numbers

Health Facilities reached

Week 42 & 43

102

Overall

1097

People provided with supplies

Week 42 & 43

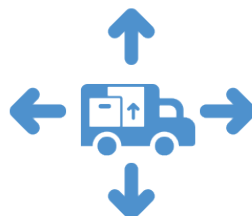
36 875

Overall

8 482 387

Supplies distributed

Week 42 & 43

20.9 MT

Overall

3 227 MT

People trained

Week 42 & 43

248

Overall

Over 10K

Interagency convoys conducted

Week 42 & 43

2

Overall

79

WHO Representative
Incident Manager
Health Emergencies Lead

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