Situational overview: The security situation in eastern Ukraine deteriorated in the first half of December, with more than 26,000 ceasefire violations recorded.

Protection concerns: The protection environment remains difficult due to harsh winter conditions; UNHCR began implementation of its winter assistance plan.

Assistance provided: In December, UNHCR provided winterization, non-food items (NFIs), and emergency shelter assistance to more than 22,000 people.

KEY INDICATORS

57,460
IDPs and conflict-affected persons reached through NFI assistance from UNHCR and partners in 2017.

33,000
IDPs and conflict-affected persons received legal assistance from UNHCR partners in 2017.

3,450
Households in eastern Ukraine received UNHCR shelter assistance in 2017.

FUNDING (AS OF 2 JANUARY)

USD 37.6 M requested for Ukraine

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP)* AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS**

1.8 million

ASYLUM SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE***

- Russian Fed. 427,240
- Italy 11,230
- Germany 10,590
- Spain 8,720
- Poland 4,610

* Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).
** Estimated number of conflict-affected persons living along the line of contact in GCA and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).
*** Source (external displacement): respective government authorities. External displacement data refers to the total number of asylum applications by Ukrainians (first time applications) in the top five receiving countries since the beginning of the Ukraine situation in January 2014.
Update on Achievements

Operational Context
In mid-December, the security situation in the Eastern Conflict Area (ECA) saw a significant increase in ceasefire violations, with OSCE reporting over 26,000 ceasefire violations during a one-week period. During 18-19 December, shelling targeted civilian residential areas and utility infrastructure in both Luhansk and Donetsk regions, causing at least nine civilian casualties, damaging 52 homes, a kindergarten, a cultural centre, a clinic, and disrupting electricity supplies to a water pumping station and cutting water supplies to some 15,000 people in the area. Heavy shelling of the village of Novoluanske, in the government-controlled area (GCA) of Donetsk region, led to the displacement of an unconfirmed number of the village’s 3,700 inhabitants amid freezing weather conditions to the nearby towns of Bakhmut and Svitlodarsk. In December, the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) recorded some 1,084,350 crossings of the line of contact. UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs, and SBGS to winterize five checkpoints on the GCA side of the line of contact. UNOCHA’s Humanitarian Snapshot provides an overview of the humanitarian situation.

Valentina (her name is changed for protection reasons) survived the Second World War as a child. Now, living in Novotoretske, she revisits her nightmares as she struggles to cope with the conflict in eastern Ukraine. UNHCR assists Valentina to repair her shell-damaged home. Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Hugo Reichenberger
Achievements

Protection Cluster

The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, met in Kharkiv and Sloviansk. Freedom of movement, including transfer of goods across the contact line, and access to pensions and social benefits continued to be key protection concerns. The Cluster was concerned by the increased fighting in the area of Novoluhanske, which was shelled on December 18, with buildings and civilian infrastructure, including educational facilities and a medical centre, being hit. Eight civilians were injured, including a child. According to protection cluster partners, roughly around 15-20 per cent of the population (approximately 400 people) were temporarily displaced and sought safety in surrounding areas. Residents requested additional psychosocial support due to the trauma sustained as a result of the heavy shelling.

Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

The Government of Ukraine and Parliament amended legislation related to the improvement of the pension system. Amendments include a provision requiring the Cabinet of Ministers to prepare and submit a draft law concerning how pensioners residing in the NGCA will receive their pensions for Parliament’s consideration within six months after the law enters into force (by 3 April 2018); The new legislation could address the issue of de-linking IDP registration and pensions. UNHCR will follow progress on this closely and continue its advocacy work on legislative developments that affects displaced persons in Ukraine with a variety of counterparts.

UNHCR distributed individual protection assistance (IPA) cash programme to 4,425 vulnerable persons either displaced or affected by the conflict in the government-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. The cash assistance was distributed by UkrPoshta (the Ukrainian postal service) via post offices following an agreement between UNHCR and UkrPoshta.

During the reporting period, 13,600 IDPs and conflict-affected people approached UNHCR and its partners for legal or protection consultations. In government-controlled areas, UNHCR partner Chirikli provided five legal consultations, CrimeaSOS provided 321 legal consultations and 147 protection consultations, and Desyate Kvitnya provided 149 legal consultations. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) provided protection counselling to 564 persons, information assistance to 762 persons, and legal assistance to five persons. The NGO ‘Right to Protection’ (R2P) provided legal assistance to 1,052 persons and protection assistance to 1,226 persons. The UNHCR hotline managed by
R2P received 125 calls. Main concerns included civil documentation, targeted financial assistance, administrative services, HLP, freedom of movement, pensions, social, humanitarian and medical assistance.

In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk region, UNHCR partners provided some 8,600 protection consultations, including home visits and hotline consultations, and 680 legal consultations. UNHCR’s partners also conducted community development training for over 1,600 persons on subjects including personal development, interpersonal communication, personal safety and career advice. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk region, UNHCR provided 7 protection consultations and 27 hotline consultations. Main concerns of persons seeking UNHCR included access to pensions and social assistance, HLP, freedom of movement, and humanitarian assistance.

SHELTER AND NFIS
Shelter and NFIs Cluster

The Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR and co-chaired by NGO People in Need (PiN), published its update on Winterization 2017-2018 [pdf]. Since August 2017, Shelter Cluster members have or will assist 10,056 households in the GCA and 6,166 households in the NGCA with heating materials for the winter period, while 17,223 persons in the GCA and 11,642 persons in the NGCA have or will receive support for purchasing of basic winter clothing and blankets. With over 800 homes damaged in 2017 alone, shelter agencies are assisting 1,904 households with glazing and ceiling insulation. Agencies are also assisting 161 communal structures in the GCA, focusing on assisting schools, hospitals, and collective centres.

In 2017, Cluster partners provided emergency shelter and winterization assistance to over 118,500 persons. More than 6,800 households were assisted with light and medium repairs, while 22,125 households were assisted with structural repairs and reconstruction of their homes.

Throughout Ukraine, there remain 215 operational collective centres providing accommodation to IDPs. The Cluster has observed a trend in the closure of collective centres leading to the risk of involuntary eviction, while seeing an increase in the occupancy of centres remaining open. More than 50 per cent of IDPs have to pay for rent and utilities, while half struggle with payments. 38 per cent of collective centres report having residents with debts for rent and utilities of between UAH15,000 and 90,000 (USD 522 to 3,132). While collective centres are only intended as a temporary accommodation solution, many IDPs remain in the centres for extended periods due to lack of durable housing solutions.
Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

- **Winterization**: During the December, UNHCR began implementing its winterization plan in Eastern Ukraine. In government-controlled areas, 843 vulnerable households were selected to receive a one-time unconditional winter cash grants of UAH 7,800 (USD 273) to help meet winter costs such as heating and clothing. UkrPoshta, will administer distribution of payments. UNHCR and its partners distributed winter jackets to more than 9,500 children in the GCA during the reporting period. In NGCA, UNHCR provided 2,800 tons of coal to 930 beneficiaries (each household receiving three tonnes of coal), and winter clothing to 10,000 persons. In addition to winterization assistance, in government-controlled areas, UNHCR Dnipro Sub-office provided NFIs to five families affected by a fire at IDP accommodation in Kamianske.

- **Response to Shelling of Novoluhanske**: UNHCR partner NGO Proliska assessed the situation on site soon after the events and delivered emergency shelter materials and NFIs despite hazardous conditions. UNHCR immediately dispatched 500 emergency shelter kits for distribution by Proliska. UNHCR’s partner People in Need (PiN) delivered emergency shelter materials to a local housing maintenance office for distribution by the local civil-military administration. Furthermore, UNHCR’s partners assisted some 500 households based on individual needs.

- In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, a construction company contracted by UNHCR completed repairs of 16 conflict-damaged homes. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk region, UNHCR provided emergency shelter assistance to 190 households in Kadiivka and Pervomaisk affected by shelling. Due to ongoing insecurity in the area and subsequent restricted humanitarian access, UNHCR provided the shelter materials to local authorities for distribution. UNHCR also distributed NFIs and UNICEF-provided items to the central children’s hospital.

- Further details of UNHCR’s assistance can be found on the shelter and NFI dashboard.

Working in partnership

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

- UNHCR signed a Letter of Understanding with the Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons establishing a framework for collaboration and coordination aimed at maximizing the capacity of UNHCR and the Ministry to assist IDPs.

- UNHCR works together with 11 partners as well as other operational partners providing support to IDPs through protection and legal assistance, policy development and capacity building and the distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items. UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and co-chairs the Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster together with People in Need.
Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some US$ 14.3 million, including US$ 9.9 million for the situation.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

**Funding received (in million USD)**

- European Union: 4.38
- United States of America: 3.6
- Germany: 1.71
- Norway: 1.19
- Sweden: 1.11
- Canada: 0.74
- Private Donors: 0.5
- Estonia: 0.45
- Japan: 0.33
- Russian Federation: 0.25
External / Donors Relations

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2017
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