

UKRAINE

Situation report No.30 as of 6 March 2015

This report is produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers 28 February 2015 – 6 March 2015, unless otherwise noted. The next report will be published on 13 March.

Highlights

- Unexploded ordnances and mines contamination are a major challenge for the return to normalcy in many conflict-affected areas.
- Bureaucratic hurdles continue to prevent access to non-government controlled areas, affecting humanitarian operations. The first humanitarian food convoy since December travelled from Severodonetsk to Luhansk this week.
- Lack of money and the devaluation of the currency triggered returns in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, despite the prevailing insecurity.

1.1 million registered IDPs

Source: Ministry of Social Policy



Galina, 65, salvaged all she could from her destroyed home in the village of Nikishine in eastern Ukraine. The street is littered with unexploded mortars and mines. Photo: UNHCR / A. McConnell

Situation Overview

While humanitarian needs remain high across eastern Ukraine, a decrease in military activities is reported along the contact line as the ceasefire was generally upheld with isolated incidents and few military and civilian casualties recorded. Between mid-April 2014 and 5 March 2015, at least 5,820 people (including 63 children) were documented as killed and 15,270 as wounded (including 169 children)¹. Given that full reports on casualties, especially near Donetsk airport and in the Debaltseve area, are still pending, the total number of people killed in eastern Ukraine is estimated as having passed the 6,000 mark.

In general, people are capitalizing on the cessation of hostilities to repair their homes, while at the same time the contact line remains fluid in terms of population movements. As of 2 March, the government reports 1,099,618 registered IDPs across the country. Bureaucratic procedures to enter non-government controlled territories continue to be inconsistently applied both to civilians and to aid agencies: waiting periods to obtain passes are sporadic and random, unevenly applied in different locations, and seriously hampering the delivery of humanitarian assistance and freedom of movement of civilians.

Since the ceasefire, some people have started returning to Debaltseve, where humanitarian assistance, including food, medicine, and hygiene items have been distributed by the UN, international and national organizations and the de facto authorities. Those who have returned are requesting building and shelter repair materials. While assistance is focused and distributed in Debaltseve city, needs remain in the surrounding villages. In Vuhlegirsk, where 3,000 people remain (9,800 before the conflict) and where destruction is heavy, some food has been distributed but there is a need for plastic sheeting, shelter material, and medicines. Nikishino (300 people) received limited quantities of food, NFIs, hygiene items, while Kamianka (60 people), Maloorlivka (700 people),

¹ This is a conservative estimate of the UN Human Rights Mission in Ukraine (HRMU) and the World Health Organization based on available official data: casualties of the Ukrainian armed forces as reported by the Ukrainian authorities; 298 people from flight MH-17; and casualties reported by medical establishments of Donetsk and Luhansk regions: civilians and some members of the armed groups. The HRMU and WHO believe that the actual numbers of fatalities are considerably higher.

Novoorlivka (300 people) did not receive any assistance. In most locations, electricity is available, but no water and heating. Large amounts of damage to housing and infrastructure has been reported across the area. Major concerns exist with regards to the presence of landmines, unexploded ordnances (UXOs) and remnants of war (ERW). Loss of income is a major challenge as the mining industry – one of the main sources of employment – and other sources of livelihood are paralyzed and pensions have not been paid for months. Civilians in the areas prioritize provision of gas, followed by shelter material, food and health assistance, and NFIs as their needs.

In locations where active fighting took place, contamination by mines and UXOs is an issue, both in Government and non-Government controlled areas. Authorities' capacity for mine action is limited. In some areas around Debaltseve, civilians are signing petitions to de facto authorities to speed up demining operations. While work is being conducted regarding mine risk awareness, a comprehensive mine action response is yet to be put in place. Some NGOs are undertaking assessment and planning mine-action related activities.

Partners reported that, due to financial constraints, some IDPs from Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are returning home despite the prevailing insecurity. The devaluation of the currency has resulted in some IDPs not being able to afford living expenses such as rent and food. There are also concerns that the financial situation has led to an increase in crime, resulting in an increased reporting of negative perceptions of IDPs in host communities.

The situation for 4,000 people (including 119 children and 61 adults with disabilities) who remain in 21 institutional care facilities in areas beyond Government control is precarious as the institutions have not been receiving systematic support for months. Humanitarian access is often limited due to the distant locations of these institutions. There is a severe lack of medicines and food.

For the first time since December, 6,664 WFP food parcels were transported across the contact line from Severodonetsk to the non-government controlled territory of Luhansk. Lengthy bureaucratic procedures, last-minute requests for additional movements, a lack of clear instruction to checkpoints on allowing free passage of trucks from Severodonetsk and humanitarian personnel, represented obstacles. These issues were resolved only after two days of intense follow up and negotiations. The presences of landmines and UXOs along the road in areas beyond government control were also major obstacles. Some 800 parcels have been distributed in Pervomaisk town and 800 in Vesela Tarasivka village for Lutuhyne raion. The remaining 5,064 will be distributed in the coming days.

An amendment to the tax code (amending Article 165) was passed by the Parliament on 2 March, and awaits the signature of the President. The proposed law stipulates that IDPs will not be taxed on any humanitarian assistance provided by listed charitable international NGOs. Unknown elements in this law are the mechanisms and criteria for the list of charities to be compiled by the Cabinet of Ministers, whether tax exemption will also cover assistance to vulnerable groups beyond the registered IDPs in government-controlled areas, and whether local organizations are also included in this provision.

On 6 March, OCHA Operations Director, John Ging, delivered a statement to UN Security Council on behalf of Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, on the situation in Ukraine. He urged all parties to the conflict to end the violence and adhere to the 15 February ceasefire and protect civilians. He also stressed the importance of humanitarian actors being able to reach all those in need with life-saving assistance, and called on all parties to the conflict to facilitate the safe and unimpeded passage of aid and aid workers, and to lift any administrative obstacles to this passage.

Funding

As of 6 March, donors funded or pledged USD 42 million to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), or 13 percent of the USD 316 million required for 2015.

OCHA records all humanitarian contributions through its Financial Tracking Service (FTS). Please register your contributions by emailing fts@un.org or through the online contribution form at fts.unocha.org.

Humanitarian Response



Livelihoods and Early Recovery (cluster lead: Inita Paulovica, Inita.Paulovica@undp.org)

Needs:

- Pension payments have not yet resumed in non-government controlled areas. Banking system remains non-operational.

- Critical infrastructures are damaged in a number of cities.
- Employment and income generation needs are reported in all affected areas. Recent reports indicate a need for livelihoods support in Makiivka, Kyiv, Debaltseve IDPs locations and areas of return.

Response:

- Training for IDPs and host communities on development of business ideas and business plan writing were held in Dobropillia (Donetska oblast).
- DTEK energy specialists restored electricity supplies to 10 communities in Donetsk region. Electricity was also partially restored in Donetsk, Marinka, Debaltseve, Vuhlegirsk, Horlivka, Avdiivka. As of 4 March, 80,000 residents remain disconnected.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Communal and private enterprises (DTEK, Water of Donbass and similar) are able to continue their reconstruction work though resources are depleting and debt continues to increase.

**Education** (cluster leads: Rudi Luchmann, rluchmann@unicef.org; Rekha Das, redas@unicef.org)**Needs:**

- Schools in Horlivka reportedly reopened on 24 February. However access to education is still hampered in some areas (Andriivka and Kramatorsk) because of lack of public transport.
- The Education Department in Lugansk reports that out of the 363 schools in the region some 300 are working. Two schools in the villages of Triokhizbenka and Krymske and five are located in Luhansk city have been destroyed.
- Several schools and kindergartens near the demarcation line, including those in Kramatorsk, are reportedly open, but still without heating and in need of education supplies due to the increasing number of IDP students.

Response:

- In February, UNICEF and NGO partner Rubezhi delivered education kits to 500 children in Sviatohirsk and Sloviansk.
- Save the Children has organized catch-up classes for IDP children who are lacking behind in curriculum due to limited or no access to school for certain period of time. This program has been organized as after-school-classes in two school in Dnepropetrovsk Oblast reaching 96 (59 girls and 37 boys) children.
- The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Danish Demining Group (DDG) in collaboration with UNICEF support a Mine Risk Education (MRE) project in the crisis affected areas. The objective is to strengthen government capacity in the injury surveillance system for mine/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)-related incidents and to increase children's safety by enhancing the knowledge on risks and motivating safe behavior among children of preschool and school age and their parents in Donbas.

Gaps & Constraints:

- A comprehensive and collective overview of the distinct education needs of boys and girls is needed to facilitate a more coordinated and targeted response.

**Emergency Shelter and NFI** (cluster lead: Igor Chantefor, chantefo@unhcr.org)**Needs:**

- Many people are returning to their homes; they need emergency repairs and basic NFIs.
- Many small settlements in NGCAs are seriously damaged, while people tend to stay at home. Plastic sheeting, candles, lamps, clothing are required to provide emergency assistance.

Response:

- 1,881 HHs more have received multifunctional cash assistance provided by cluster partners, which brings the total to 32,378 HHs. As many are finalizing cash programs, a post-distribution monitoring meeting is planned for next week to discuss findings.
- 3,429 persons have received NFIs (blankets, warm clothes, heaters), over 60 percent of recipients are in Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk areas under Government control.
- UNHCR and PiN have provided 200 blankets, winter coats and warm clothing packages to the most vulnerable population of Nikishine village (10 km East of Debaltseve) that was seriously affected by shelling (more than 90% of houses are damaged).

- 84 HHs more have received glazing in Sloviansk. UNHCR continues distribution of plastic sheets in Donetsk region (NGCAs), providing emergency shelter solutions to the affected population that remain in the conflict zone.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Delays of deliveries to NGCAs because of issues at checkpoints continue hindering adequate humanitarian response.



Food Security (cluster leads: Elena Rovaris elena.rovaris@wfp.org)

Needs:

- Food needs were identified for Vuhlehirsk, Kamianka, Maloorlivka and Novoorlivka, among other places.

Response:

- In the last week, WFP and its implementing partners, have distributed food parcels as well as market-based vouchers to about 2,300 vulnerable individuals in Donetsk and Luhansk. Food parcels (one month ration for one person) were distributed in NGCA, including Luhansk city, Horlivka, Khanzhenkove, Nikishine, Rovenki and other cities directly in the frontline of fighting. Among these location, Nikishine where without assistance for 6 months. 500 food parcels were also distributed by the URCS and Austrian RC (AitRC) to IDPs in Severodonetsk within the "Winterization project".
- Market-based vouchers were distributed in areas where markets are functioning to more than 600 vulnerable people in Donetsk oblast. PiN finished distribution of 162 vouchers: 81 in Sloviansk and 81 in Donetsk.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Limited availability of commodities in the shops in areas beyond Government control. This may result in challenges to provide vouchers to affected people.
- Significant challenges in accessing t non-government controlled areas.



Health & Nutrition (cluster lead: Dr. Dorit Nitzan, DON@euro.who.int; Patricia Kormoss, kpj@euro.who.int)

Needs

- Conflict area hospitals need trauma care medicines and consumables², laboratory reagents and diagnostic supplies, haemodialysis consumables, insulin and oncology medicines. Lack of medical professionals and food remains a great concern. Donetsk Burns Centre is in constant need of silver sulfadiazine.
- There is a need for cytostatics, laboratory reagents, analgesics and antibiotics, IV fluids in Donetsk and Luhansk Hospitals stays unmet.
- Assessments in Luhansk, Alchevsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv were held. The main needs are machines and supplies for hemodialysis, diabetes treatment, cardiac surgery, oncology treatment, functional beds, equipment for operational room. Staff training on the rehabilitation of wounded, patients with prostheses, management of burns and on psychological first aid in child institutions is requested.
- Many patients with active TB cannot register as IDPs because of the lack of documentation. There is an urgent need to restore documents (passport, social benefits documents, etc.). Obtaining registration requires a stay in long queues that is dangerous and unacceptable in terms of infection control.

Response:

- 3 MEPU (Mobile emergency primary health care unit) teams in Mariupol (run by IMC/Greek medical foundation "Hippocrates") and 7 teams in Severodonetsk, Slaviansk, Sviatohirsk, Kupyansk, Izium, Zaporizhia and Pavlohrad (run by Ukrainian Red Cross) have provided 2,242 consultations for IDP and residing population.

² Antiseptic solutions, antibiotics, anticoagulants, scalpel blades, surgical sutures, drainage tubes, stomach probes, urinary catheters, anti-infectives, antibiotics, external fixation, plaster of Paris, bandages material, X-ray films, analgesics, anesthetics, muscle relaxants, spinal needles, epidural sets, subclavian catheters, intravenous catheters system for blood transfusion, syringes, infusion solutions (colloids, crystalloids), blood products, vaccines.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Small Governmental funds for oblast health care and the devaluation of the hryvnia has resulted in depleted state procurement of medical supplies for the residing population and IDPs. In addition lack of funding for fuel for ambulance services is reported across all conflict-affected areas.
- Luhansk Oblast Tuberculosis Dispensary is requesting assistance in delivering Global Fund TB medicines from Lysychansk to Luhansk.

**Protection** (cluster co-leads: Ilija Todorovic, todorovi@unhcr.org; Fiona Frazer, ffrazer@ohchr.org) – see also overview**Needs:**

- There are currently two ongoing lawsuits challenging government policies related to social payments. Those concerned with these policies are in need of legal services, particularly older people whose pensions and social benefits have been cut.

Response:

- Protection Cluster partners continue to provide consultations and information to IDPs on the procedure of recovery of documents and legal assistance relating to registration and state financial support.
- For IDPs who do not have the required documents (labor books/payslips/de-registration in government controlled areas), Protection Cluster partners are working with State employment authorities at the national and regional level to improve the system related to the access to employment.
- There are reports of social protection departments (i.e. in Mariupol) who refuse registration of IDPs due to absence of official instructions from the central government. Protection partners will work with the Ministry of Social Planning to address this issue.

Gaps & Constraints:

- See the situation overview section, regarding mine action response.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene** (cluster lead: Rudi Luchmann, rluchmann@unicef.org)**Needs:**

- The State Sanitary Epidemiological Service of Ukraine expressed concern about the risk of occurrence and spreading of infectious diseases among IDPs and the residents in conflict areas as intermittent access of affected populations to water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene supplies could lead to such consequences.
- Donetsk filter station is reportedly not functioning, due to heavy shelling in January, resulting in Avdiivka, Krasnohorivka, and part of Donetsk and Yasynuvata cities having no centralized water supply.
- In Luhansk oblast, the residents complain of low quality water.

Response:

- ADRA distributed 1,400 cash vouchers (of UAH 3,300 each) to 5,180 beneficiaries in Kyiv, Poltava, Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk cities for procurement of hygiene items.
- UNICEF procured 150 Baby hygiene kits and 80 Family hygiene kits to be distributed to approximately 800 vulnerable people in the region of Donetsk.
- UNICEF sent 15,000 Peepoo bags (disposable excreta/toilet bags) to Donetsk to address the sanitation needs of people in bomb shelters.
- To date, Save the Children distributed 240 hygiene kits in Dnipropetrovsk city reaching 316 adults and 302 children, and 99 hygiene kits in Zaporizhia city to 101 adults and 168 children.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Limited resources affect the WASH Response.
- Ongoing instances of fighting hinders access to safe drinking water

**Logistics** (cluster lead: Kennet Blixt, kennet.blixt@wfp.org)**Response:**

- As provider of last resort, the Logistics Cluster, under the lead of WFP, will be providing interagency warehousing and transport from an Eastern staging area at Dnipropetrovsk to Donetsk and Luhansk. The use of common transport under the UN umbrella will ease the administrative demands on individual organisations and streamline the process of moving cargo into non-government controlled areas.

- The Logistics Cluster has made available logistics planning maps of Ukraine, Eastern Ukraine, Donetsk and Luhansk: www.logcluster.org/ops/ukr15a. Further logistics maps can be produced on request.

Gaps & Constraints:

- The main constraint remains access to the NCGAs due to insecurity, damage to roads and bridges, and bureaucratic hurdles.
- Intermittent but sometimes lengthy breaks in cell phone service due to damaged infrastructure following clashes makes communications an ongoing issue.

Coordination

- With the revision of the Humanitarian Response Plan, the Education Cluster strategic objectives for 2015 have been revised to ensure access to quality education for all crisis-affected children, and provide mine risk education for children, parents and caregivers, educators and civil society actors. The psychosocial activities are now part of the Child Protection cluster objectives and will be coordinated hereunder.
- The Humanitarian Response website (<http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/ukraine>) aims to strengthen information sharing among the humanitarian community in Ukraine and beyond. It is easy to navigate and provides useful overviews of contacts, events/meetings, key documents, maps and infographics, statistics and other operational data. Each cluster has a dedicated page to upload cluster-specific information. OCHA will populate the website over the coming weeks and welcome any suggestions your organization might have to improve layout and contents.

Background on the crisis

In April 2014, armed groups in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk) began to seize buildings and arms. As a result of ongoing fighting between armed groups and government forces, and of events in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) in March 2014, people fled their homes and have become increasingly vulnerable as the conflict spread. Those in parts of Donbas affected by fighting, face imminent security threats due to military activities by all parties to the conflict that are increasingly concentrated in densely populated urban areas. Provision of basic services has been disrupted, supplies are increasingly limited, and an upsurge in lawlessness has occurred. Ongoing daily ceasefire violations continue to be reported, despite the 5 September Ceasefire and 19 September nine-point Memorandum agreed in Minsk. Indiscriminate shelling and continued insecurity are placing conflict-affected people and humanitarian actors at risk.

For further information, please contact:

Alexandra Eurdolian, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Kyiv | eurdolian@un.org | +380 95 284 7322
 Jake Morland, Desk Officer, New York | morland@un.org | +1 212 963 2066

OCHA Ukraine Situation Reports are available at: <http://reliefweb.int/country/ukr>

To be added or deleted from this situation report mailing list, please e-mail: Kuttsel@un.org, kalinina@un.org