HIGHLIGHTS (9 Sep 2020)

- As of 9 September 2020, there are 143,030 people confirmed to have COVID-19 in Government-controlled areas of Ukraine, including 2,242 cases in eastern Ukraine.

- There are reportedly 3,460 confirmed COVID-19 cases in areas beyond Government control, including 173 deaths.

- Since the start of the conflict in 2014, the fundamental human right to education of children in eastern Ukraine has been under threat.

- Three entry/exit crossing points in eastern Ukraine partially re-open after being closed for almost three months.

KEY FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in need</th>
<th>People targeted</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4M</td>
<td>2.1M</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUNDING (2020)

- Required: $204.7M
- Received: $60.2M
- Progress: 29%

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ANALYSIS (9 Sep 2020)

Education under threat for youth in eastern Ukraine

More than six years of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine has led to a chaotic and fragmented educational system and had a profound impact on the well-being of the nearly 670,000 school-aged children living in the region. The global COVID-19 pandemic has further compounded these problems. A recently issued report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine on attacks on education sheds light on the challenges that youth in eastern Ukraine face in accessing education amid the ongoing armed conflict and health crisis.
Since the start of the conflict in 2014, the fundamental human right to education of children in eastern Ukraine has been under threat. Shelling and small-arms fire has damaged schools and other key civilian infrastructure. According to the OSCE report, since 2015, 93 educational facilities have been damaged in more than 40 settlements across Luhanska and Donetska oblasts, resulting in nine casualties, including three fatalities. Between January 2016 and March 2020, over a dozen children were killed and over 55 were injured by landmines and explosive devices. This constant exposure to violence, combined with the stress associated with the economic downturn and the recent pandemic, poses long-term threats to both youth and educators.

Students living in settlements close to the ‘contact line’ have had the most difficulty accessing schools. Class attendance has been disrupted by physical attacks on schools, weak transport links, COVID-19-related restrictions and the physical barrier of the ‘contact line’, which separates some schools from the communities they historically served. Even before the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions, school closures were a common occurrence, with some schools closed for months or indefinitely after being repeatedly damaged by shelling. Although, according to the Ukraine Education Cluster, some 400 educational facilities received aid between January 2017 and June 2019 to repair conflict-related damage, it has been difficult for schools located within close proximity to the ‘contact line’ to secure funds due to the likelihood that they will be damaged again. This has resulted in some schools being shut down, with children having to travel further distances to access education.

Already prior to the pandemic, the lack of transportation in rural, isolated communities along the ‘contact line’ posed challenges for children in eastern Ukraine to attend school. In 2019, some 5,000 children from non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) were enrolled in distance learning as a result of school closures and mobility restrictions. This figure has likely risen during the last quarter of the 2020 school year due to the constraints on movement imposed by the health crisis. Although schools in conflict-affected areas have resumed in-person teaching this September, the number of new COVID-19 cases has doubled in the past month in Government-controlled areas (GCA), indicating that schools might need to return to distance learning. More than half of children residing close to the ‘contact line’ were left without adequate access to education during quarantine due to the introduction of remote learning arrangements because they lacked equipment or internet access.

In addition to the physical impacts of the conflict, children and educators alike have been affected psychologically. In a UNICEF report on the situation of children living near the contact line, over three-quarters of school directors and teachers interviewed in areas near the contact line noted strong behavioral changes in students since the beginning of the conflict. In heavily shelled districts in particular, numerous children show symptoms consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder. UNICEF estimates that some 430,000 children live with psychological wounds and need ongoing support to address the emotional trauma of growing up in a prolonged conflict. An alarming 22.5 percent of adolescents in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts are at risk of developing clinical levels of internalizing or externalizing problems in adulthood. The deteriorating economic situation in the region has also contributed to feelings of anxiety and insecurity among many families. Despite these concerns, according to the report from the OSCE, 80 per cent of schools visited by the SMM in 2018 and 2019 had no psychologists on staff. Although psychological support is often available through humanitarian actors in GCA, access is limited in NGCA.
The conflict has not only disrupted children’s present reality in eastern Ukraine, but their futures too. Education can be a lifeline for children growing up surrounded by violence and a building block to a more stable and peaceful society. Yet, the psychological impacts of the conflict and barriers to accessing education are threatening to compromise the well-being and future of an entire generation. As the new school year begins, humanitarian actors in eastern Ukraine continue to find ways to ensure that children can access their basic right to education while preventing the transmission of the virus. The recently announced ceasefire, if proved sustainable, presents a window of opportunity to repair schools damaged by the conflict, and brings renewed hope for children to be able to learn in a more safe and secure environment.

TRENDS (9 Sep 2020)

COVID-19 update (Government-controlled areas)

Ministry of Health of Ukraine confirms 143,030 cases as of 9 September.

- **First case:** 29 February 2020
- **Total cases:** 143,030 (as of 9 September 2020)
- **Total deaths:** 2,979
- **States affected:** All 24 oblasts
- **Luhanska oblast:** 480 confirmed cases (four deaths)
- **Donetska oblast:** 1,762 confirmed cases (27 deaths)
- **Borders/flights:** Ukraine re-opened the majority of crossing points with neighbouring countries (i.e., Belarus, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, and Slovakia). Ukraine also resumed international and domestic passenger flights from 15 June 2020. Yet, considering the aggravating epidemiological situation, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine prolonged the adaptive quarantine until 1 November 2020 and closed the Ukrainian border for foreign nationals from 29 August to 28 September apart from persons falling other the following categories: first-degree relatives of Ukrainian nationals, persons with residency/work permits for Ukraine, persons in transit, diplomats and staff of international organizations, among others. The staff of the UN and INGOs who are accredited in Ukraine and have residency permits (either temporary or permanent) will be allowed to enter, while the entry ban still concerns new staff members of INGOs (i.e., those without residency or accreditation).
- **Containment measures:** In mid-March, the Government of Ukraine imposed quarantine restrictions to minimize the risk of transmission across the country, including in the conflict-affected area of eastern Ukraine. In May, these restrictions began to ease based on the fulfillment of criteria adopted on both sides of the ‘contact line’. In the Government-controlled areas, the adaptive quarantine was introduced to counter the spread of the virus. Oblasts are divided into the ‘red/orange/yellow/green’ COVID-19 risk level regions based on three indicators: the hospital bed occupancy, the number of tests conducted, and the COVID-19 incidence rate. The COVID-19 restrictive measures are implemented in accordance with the risk level in a given oblast. The adaptive quarantine currently in place is prolonged until 1 November 2020.

TRENDS (9 Sep 2020)

COVID-19 update (non-Government controlled areas)

Local sources reportedly confirm 3,460 COVID-19 cases as of 9 September.
- **Total cases:** 3,460 (173 deaths)
- **Luhanska oblast:** 754 cases (20 deaths). **First case:** 31 March 2020
- **Donetska oblast:** 2,706 cases (153 deaths). **First case:** 29 March 2020

**Overview of containment measures:** Luhanska and Donetska oblast (NGCA) adopted quarantine measures similar to those in Government-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine at the end of March 2020. As part of easing quarantine restrictions, both NGCA oblasts lifted restrictions on travelling to the Russian Federation and partially lifted restrictions on travelling between Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (NGCA). In the meantime, only two out of the five official crossing points allow people to cross the ‘contact line’ (EECP ‘Stanytsia Luhanska’ in Luhanska oblast and EECP ‘Novotroitske’ in Donetska oblast). To a large extent, crossings have been limited to those who have been granted humanitarian exemptions negotiated by the humanitarian community. In addition, people have been allowed to cross based on the pre-approved lists issued in NGCA. Since the partial re-opening of the ‘contact line’ in mid-June, over 130,000 people were able to cross the ‘contact line’ subject to the self-quarantine or undergoing observation.

**ANALYSIS (26 Aug 2020)**

**Crossing points in eastern Ukraine are gradually re-opening, yet lack a coordinated, systematic approach**

On 21 March 2020, all entry/exit crossing points (EECPs) in eastern Ukraine were closed in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19 in communities along the 420-kilometer ‘contact line’ as well as in the rest of Ukraine. Before the closure, approximately 1.2 million people regularly crossed each month to reach Government and non-Government controlled areas and even at higher rates during the summer period, averaging at 1.5 million crossings per month.

Five months after the introduction of COVID-19-related quarantine measures, most of EECPs remain closed, with only two out of the five official crossing points allowing people to cross the ‘contact line’ (EECP ‘Stanytsia Luhanska’ in Luhanska oblast and EECP ‘Novotroitske’ in Donetska oblast). The gradual easing of quarantine restrictions and the adoption of humanitarian exemptions permitting people with acute needs to cross have led to an increase in civilian crossings across the ‘contact line’ in summer. In July, some 37,700 persons were able to cross the ‘contact line’ compared to 17,700 in June.

Even though more people are now able to cross the ‘contact line’, some of the most vulnerable categories as pensioners are still unable to withdraw their pensions in areas under Government control. It is estimated that the closure has impacted more than one million people, including more than 300,000 elderly and 163,000 vulnerable persons who have not been able to access their hard-earned pensions or withdraw cash since late March by crossing the ‘contact line’. After several months without access to the only source of income for many, elderly are forced to find alternative ways to reach their pensions, which are usually lengthier, costly and legally challenging. To a large extent, crossings have been limited to those who have been granted humanitarian exemptions negotiated by the humanitarian community. These exemptions include death or disease of a close relative, as well as severe or chronic illness requiring urgent medical intervention. Students participating in university admissions exams and adults accompanying them have also been granted special permission to cross.
In some cases, people could not cross as they could not fulfil some of the requirements (i.e., self-isolate using "Dii Vdoma" application or undergo observation upon arrival). Even after the expiration of the Cabinet of Ministers’ resolution regulating these requirements on 1 August, reportedly, people willing to cross to the Government-controlled side were still mandated to install the app to undergo self-isolation or agree to observation in a designated facility. The rule that requires to install the app to monitor self-isolation prevents people with older phones or without internet connection from crossing the ‘contact line’. While some ad hoc solutions were implemented as a temporary measure (e.g., installing WiFi hotspots at EECPs), no systemic resolution to this issue was found so far.

The insufficient and large gaps in communication, as well as the absence of clearly communicated information concerning eligibility and crossing procedures continues to lead to people spending nights at the ‘contact line’. Humanitarian and other actors have been assisting these people with food, water, and other basic supplies, yet, it remains imperative that all relevant parties apply well-coordinated and realistic measures to prevent such situations from happening in the future. It is also essential that all actors involved in re-opening the EECPs follow recommendations from the World Health Organization and the humanitarian community to mitigate the potential health risks for those crossing and working at the EECPs and to ensure smoother operation of crossing points.

**VISUAL** (25 Aug 2020)

**Crossing Points Snapshot (July 2020)**

The crossing situation has remained mostly unchanged, with only two entry-exit crossing points (EECP) operational in both directions – EECP ‘Stanitsa Luhanska’ in Luhanska oblast (daily) and EECP ‘Novoazovsk’ in Donetsk oblast (two days a week). The number of civilian crossings has doubled in July – from some 18,000 in June to 38,000. Reportedly, the sub-group members on Humanitarian issues of the Trilateral Contact Group reconfirmed their readiness to simultaneously OPEN two additional EECPs in Luhanska Oblast. According to OSCE, it is expected to take place no later than 10 November 2020.

**OPERATIONAL UPDATES**

Civilian entry to non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) still requires pre-approval of the de facto entities. Although more communication channels have recently been established to allow people in both Government-controlled areas (GCA) and NGCA to submit their registration requests, the process could take up to three weeks and the selection criteria remains somewhat unclear.

The 14-day self-isolation requirement remains in place until 31 August for people entering GCA from NGCA. This is contrary to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine’s resolution allowing an immediate removal of this requirement as of 1 August. In Donetsk oblast (NGCA), the two-week observation in a designated medical facility remains mandatory for people entering NGCA from GCA.

The volume of humanitarian cargoes to NGCA has been fall in recent months due to the crossing restrictions. Between March to July 2020, around 250 tons of humanitarian cargo has been delivered to NGCA, compared to 500 tons during the same period in 2019. A closer look revealed a tenfold dip in Luhanska oblast (NGCA), where less than 25 tons of humanitarian cargo has been delivered this year (March-July), compared to some 250 tons during the same months in 2019. Meanwhile, all humanitarian organizations operating in NGCA and humanitarian convoys intended for NGCA are required to re-register with the Ministry for the Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories despite having registration with the Ministry’s predecessor.

The restrictions for humanitarian actors to travel to NGCA have been partially removed. In Donetsk oblast (NGCA), the mandatory self-isolation requirement has been shortened from 14 to seven (7) days, and staff members are required to provide negative PCR test results upon entering and agree to undergo a second test after the self-isolation period. In Luhanska oblast (NGCA), the self-quarantine has been reduced to ten (10) days; however, these exemptions are applicable to international staff members only.

**COMPARISON OF THE MONTHLY CIVILIAN CROSSINGS (Jan - July)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of crossings in 2019</th>
<th>Number of crossings in 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>150,000</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY FIGURES**

- Pedestrian crossings in July 2020: **38k**
- Vehicle crossings in July 2020: **400**

**PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS AT EECPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EECP</th>
<th>GCA to NGCA</th>
<th>NGCA to GCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNE</td>
<td>JUNE</td>
<td>JUNE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANITSA LUHANSKA</td>
<td>4,552</td>
<td>3,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVOTROVSKY</td>
<td>4,674</td>
<td>3,367</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAIKOVRYE</td>
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<td>2,987</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARINKA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRIVNOVA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAIN REASONS TO CROSS**

- Family reunion
- Return to place of origin
- Medical reason

https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/
Downloaded: 9 Sep 2020
VISUAL (25 Aug 2020)

Humanitarian Snapshot (as of 19 August 2020)

BACKGROUND (1 Jul 2020)

Humanitarian Context

Now in its seventh year, the conflict in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts in eastern Ukraine continues to significantly impact the lives of more than five million people living in the region, 3.4 million of whom require humanitarian assistance and protection services. Since the start of the conflict in 2014, more than 3,350 civilian men, women and children have been killed and another 7,000 injured. As the crisis persists, civilians continue to bear the brunt of the conflict. Fear of shelling, violent clashes, and the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war are the daily reality for millions of people living on both sides of the more than 420 kilometer-long ‘contact line’ -- equivalent to the length of the French-German border. Today, eastern Ukraine is considered one of the most mine-contaminated areas in the world.
The conflict has severely impacted the quality of life in eastern Ukraine, with daily hostilities damaging critical infrastructure and often disrupting essential water and sanitation services. Many people are increasingly affected by mental health issues, both due to the fear of violence as well as the long-term socio-economic impacts of the conflict. Once considered the industrial heartland of Ukraine, the region of Donbas has experienced a sharp decline in economic activities since 2014. The quality of life for those who have stayed has declined, with job security a persistent challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of these challenges, as well as access constraints for Government- and non-Government controlled areas.

Prior to the closure of the ‘contact line’ due to the COVID-19-related restrictions, which separates Government and non-Government controlled areas, an estimated 1.1 million people regularly crossed each month to access vital services or visit family. Many waited long hours in the bitter winter cold or in the scorching summer heat to reach the other side. The journey was particularly arduous for the elderly, who account for more than 30 per cent of people in need in eastern Ukraine, the highest proportion of elderly living in a conflict-affected area in the world.

Despite enormous challenges, the UN and its humanitarian partners continue to deliver lifesaving assistance to millions of people across the country. In 2019, more than 1.3 million people benefited from some form of humanitarian assistance and protection services. Since 2014, over US$500 million has been mobilized through humanitarian response plans.

The humanitarian response in eastern Ukraine is coordinated through six clusters: Shelter and Non-Food Items; Protection; Health and Nutrition; Education; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; and Food Security and Livelihoods. Cluster partners conduct joint assessments, coordinate the response, and monitor humanitarian assistance and programming. They also provide relief and early recovery supplies, including food and non-food items, water, shelter materials, medicine, psycho-social support and hygienic and education kits, as well as cash assistance. Other urgent humanitarian assistance provided by the clusters includes the provision of farming inputs, mine clearance, mine-risk education, and personal protective equipment, as well as other protection services.
MEDIA (24 Jun 2020)

Yevhenia, who lives alone in a settlement close to the ‘contact line’ still exposed to hostilities, cannot fully take care of herself after a hip fracture she suffered two years ago. With the limited access to markets, health care and essential services, humanitarian assistance is the only help.

View this Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hatdZVN3Nh4

For more information, visit:
https://www.unocha.org/ukraine
https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/ukraine
https://reliefweb.int/country/ukr