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Reporting Period: 1 January to 31 March 2020

Ukraine Country Office Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1/2020



Highlights

As the armed conflict enters its seventh year, children, young people and the elderly remain the most vulnerable groups in eastern Ukraine, in both government (GCA) and non-government (NGCA) controlled areas. The protracted conflict continues to take a heavy toll on civilians: During January-March of 2020, four civilians were killed and 32 injured, including due to mines. Daily ceasefire violations, shelling and explosions have damaged scores of homes and social infrastructure.

Armed attacks on critical infrastructure such as water and services across the Line of Contact (LoC) continued to severely limit access to basic services, impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands of residents. During the reporting period, 14 incidents affecting water/sanitation/hygiene (WASH) facilities were recorded, while the Education Cluster reported at least 12 attacks on education facilities, including a case of child injury in one school.

The outbreak and spread of COVID-19 in Ukraine brought additional challenges to the region, which has a large elderly population and weak healthcare services. The quarantine measures introduced by the authorities on both sides of the LoC have severely restricted humanitarian access for the UN and partners to deliver critically needed aid. This situation has also created significant restrictions in the freedom of movement by civilians across the LoC. As schools and workplaces largely remain closed, increased cases of violence against women and children are being reported by UNICEF partners.

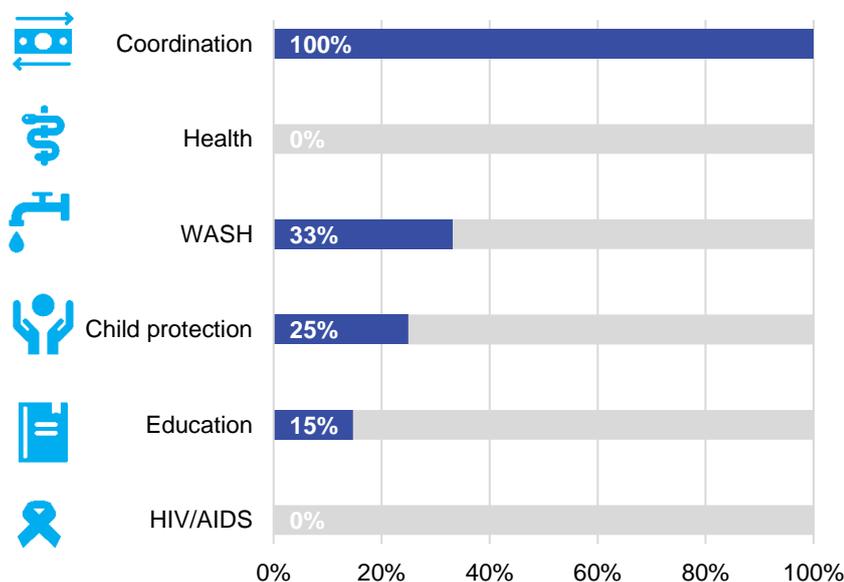
Situation in Numbers

 **430,000**
children in need of humanitarian assistance

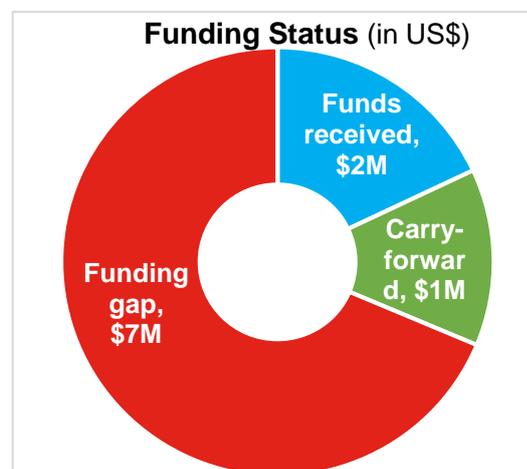
 **3,400,000**
people in need (HRP, Dec 2019)

 **220,000**
Internally displaced people (IDPs, HRP, Dec 2019)

UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



UNICEF Appeal 2020 US\$ 9,8 million



*Funding available includes carry-over and funds received in the current year.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF has appealed for US\$ 9.8M to sustain the provision of life-saving services for children and women in eastern Ukraine. Since the beginning of 2020, the governments of the USA, Italy and Estonia have generously contributed to UNICEF Ukraine's Humanitarian Action for Children appeal. UNICEF also expresses its gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received to date. However, at the end of Quarter one, the 2020 humanitarian appeal for children is underfunded by 73%. UNICEF requested and received an internal loan of US\$ 500,000 from the UNICEF Emergency Programme Funds to cover gaps in Education and WASH. Without sufficient funding, over 800,000 people will not have access to safe water and adequate sanitation, and more than 30,000 children will not receive much needed psychosocial support, with challenges posed to strengthening the local services to meet the needs of their communities and building the resilience of the conflict-affected population.

Humanitarian Strategy

In 2020, UNICEF continues its focus on protecting children and realizing the rights of every child on both sides of the Line of Contact. Responding to the urgent needs of children and their families affected by the conflict, UNICEF also aims to strengthen social protection and psychosocial support, as well as health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. UNICEF will further build the capacities of local professionals, authorities and civil society actors to strengthen the access to quality inclusive, age- and gender-sensitive social services increasing the resilience of families and children to protection-related risks.

It is worth highlighting the overall performance achieved by the 12 gender-based violence (GBV) mobile teams supported by UNICEF for several years in eastern Ukraine. These teams have provided GBV-related first aid, including psycho-social support case management; referrals to specialized services when needed for GBV/domestic violence survivors; and prevention and awareness-raising activities in communities, schools, and social support centres. They were able to increasingly gain trust, as evidenced by 97 per cent of the 364 GBV-cases reported in March giving consent to the services.

Adolescents and youth in eastern Ukraine were also supported through engagement programmes on life-skills education, resilience and conflict-resolution (mediation), community service and civic education (UpShift) contributing to building their trust, self-esteem and entrepreneurship.

Additionally, UNICEF's programmes in Disaster Risk Reduction enable adolescents to be aware of safety rules and measures in case of emergencies and industrial/environmental hazards linked to the conflict in Donbass, as well as enhancing disaster preparedness mechanisms and disaster response plans. More humanitarian funding will help to accelerate the progress and enhance the coverage of these important resilience-building actions on both sides of the Line of Contact.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health

UNICEF's medical e-vouchers project continued to benefit children and families affected by HIV and TB. In the first quarter of 2020, the project covered 596 beneficiaries, who received 803 e-vouchers, enabling them to access free medicines available in their communities. During the reporting period, 321 HIV/ TB affected children received medical consultations and medicines, 50 of whom were under the age of 5. For the last three months, 275 parents of children with HIV/TB were reached with free-of-charge medical assistance. In early 2020, the immunization campaign (IPV vaccination) in Donetsk and Luhansk NGCA was completed with more than 54,856 children (33,627 in Donetsk and 21,229 in Luhansk) vaccinated with IPV via the public healthcare system.

UNICEF continued to intensify efforts to support activities and advocacy to strengthen the healthcare system to enable local capacity to respond to the emergency and needs of the affected population, including becoming a resilient service. UNICEF supported the establishment of a working group at the Oblast (province) level, which created a modelling scheme to cover eight health geographical zones with a catchment population of 650,000. The model will see increased integration and interaction between the health and social services targeting the most vulnerable population. In continuation of UNICEF's efforts to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus, 13 hospitals (catchment population of 500,000) were identified to receive capacity building support for an adequate infection control programme, including improved WASH facilities. This programme entails building a network of hospitals in the government-controlled areas that will be able to withhold the impact of a potential epidemic or pandemic. This is a critical action, given the country's recent history of responding to several epidemics, and in view of national and local epidemic preparedness being critical to address any future emergencies.

WASH

UNICEF continued to support water utility companies, including the Voda Donbasu (VD). This company received Polyethylene pipes (1,108 m), eight pumps for replacement of the damaged/broken ones, as well to ensure emergency stocks to respond to any emergency that may occur within the VD facilities. Chlorine dosing equipment was provided to Donetsk Filter Station (DFS), which supplies water to 378,983 people in non-government-controlled areas. This assistance allowed VD to use liquid chlorine in a safer mode, as a result ensuring provision of well-treated and quality water to the population. UNICEF improved access to safe drinking

water for 41,787 people (3,170 girls, 2,722 boys, 19,312 women and 16,583 men) in Donetsk NGCA through support to public utilities, among them 5,014 people were identified as people with special needs.

UNICEF also supported the public utility company Luhanskvoda with pipes and pumps for urgent repairs and laboratory equipment for the water quality control. Overall, 85,062 residents Luhansk NGCA benefitted from improved access to water due to repairs of water networks and installation of pumps.¹

In January, UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in nine educational and three health institutions in Donetsk NGCA and improved access to water and sanitation services for 9,198 beneficiaries. UNICEF improved access to water, sanitation and heating conditions for 7,440 people, among them 7,380 children (3,780 girls, 3,600 boys) through emergency repairs in two health facilities located close to the LoC in Luhansk NGCA. Also, 30 boilers were installed in five health and 12 education institutions, improving access to hot water for 3,616 people. UNICEF also provided hygiene kits for children and their families and institutional kits for schools and kindergartens. Overall, 9,269 vulnerable individuals benefitted from improved access to hygiene supplies through the distribution of kits to 856 households and 41 institutions in Donetsk NGCA.

In January-March 2020, UNICEF continued to support water trucking to three exit-entry checkpoints and a range of educational, health care and social institutions in settlements located along the LoC with limited access to drinking water. Overall, nearly 5,000 residents of the assisted villages and towns, and around 20,000 people crossing the checkpoints every month benefitted from water trucking. In January 2020, the installation of water tanks in educational and health facilities of Bakhmut was finalized, improving resilience to water supply interruptions for 5,000 children and patients. Bottled water was provided to Lysychansk municipal hospital that often experiences water cuts improving access to safe drinking water to 2,552 people. Access to hygiene items was improved for 3,666 vulnerable individuals through the distribution of hygiene kits in towns located within 0-5kma from the Contact Line. Hygiene promotion sessions were conducted in schools and kindergartens mostly in rural areas along the contact line reaching 668 children with key hygiene messages throughout January-March 2020.

Education

In the first quarter of 2020, UNICEF continued to focus on improving access to quality education and safe learning environment through emergency repairs of education facilities (inclusive of WASH) and provision of key education materials and supplies. In January, the rehabilitation of four schools was completed in Donetsk NGCA ensuring and improving access to education for 1,155 children. The same schools benefitted from new furniture and sports equipment to ensure children access to enabling a better learning environment and retrieve the sense of normalcy. The school furniture and sports equipment were distributed to eight schools reaching to 1,109 school-aged children. These actions are undertaken under difficult conditions and restrictive humanitarian access environment.

UNICEF continued to enhance its life-skills education (LSE) programme in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), aiming to equip children and adolescents in the conflict-affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (GCA) with lifesaving and life-sustaining knowledge and skills. During the reporting period, 138 teachers and other education professionals from schools and vocational education institutions were trained in LSE methodology to deliver the cycle of sessions for more than 2,200 children living near the LoC. The sessions provided children with skills, values and behaviours needed to develop personal, interpersonal and active citizenship aspects of their individual and social lives. An additional 11 educators completed an on-line course on the life skills curriculum.

The protracted nature of the conflict requires educators and education officials in eastern Ukraine to continue responding to both the immediate and cumulative impact of the conflict. To address the relatively limited capacity of education professionals in Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) concepts, UNICEF developed a DRR approach, which is being implemented jointly with CSE capacity building program. About 50 educators from 26 education facilities in the communities along the LoC of Donetsk and Luhansk (GCA) were trained in January-February and shared acquired skills and knowledge with peers in their school communities. More than 6,130 children benefitted from this intervention.

Following the endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) by the Government of Ukraine (GoU) in November 2019, UNICEF drafted a technical note with suggested priority actions for the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) on its implementation. Most suggested actions were successfully incorporated into the draft SSD implementation action plan prepared by the MoES in March 2020. The draft is currently being discussed with other relevant ministries and following its approval, UNICEF stands ready to provide technical assistance to the GoU in the operationalization of the SSD commitments.

Child Protection

In the period of January-March 2020, UNICEF, in partnership with national and international non-government organizations, continued providing community-based psychosocial support (PSS) to children, and youth and their caregivers residing in conflict-affected settlements alongside the Line of Contact in the government-controlled area (GCA) of Donetsk Oblast. More than 1,350

¹ All materials and equipment were provided to the Voda Donbasu and Luhanskvoda in 2019, but information about support and beneficiaries are included into Report for January-March 2020 following the installation's completion and reporting to UNICEF.

beneficiaries improved their well-being and built their social and emotional resilience through individual or group consultations and activities organized at Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSs) as a result of and through the mobile teams' outreach individual or group consultations and activities organized at the CFSs. To alleviate the negative long-term impact of the ongoing armed conflict in the Donetsk region, 15 CFSs were supported with equipment, materials and games for children's social and emotional development, and three Community Initiative Teams (CITs) were established and trained on community mobilization, proposal writing and design thinking so that local communities could have increased capacities to respond to the emerging crises. Through capacity building activities implemented by partners, 160 parents and caregivers improve their knowledge and skills on positive parenting.

UNICEF continued supporting 12 PSS /gender-based violence (GBV) mobile teams in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, GCA to ensure the provision of psycho-social support and consultations to 1,827 survivors of GBV/domestic violence and 189 children affected by violence (68M/121F). As a result, most vulnerable men and women, boys and girls gained access and were referred to child-friendly and survivor-friendly protection and other social services, as well as enhanced their coping mechanisms and resilience. Additionally, about 1,601 people (714 children and 887 adults) participated in awareness-raising and prevention events aiming to reduce GBV and violence against children.

Since the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, implementing partners were advised to switch to teleworking/online mode as a part of risk mitigation measures imposed to prevent further spread of this deadly disease. Wherever applicable, partners continued providing phone and/or Skype psychological counselling in conflict-affected communities of Eastern Ukraine. In the last two weeks of March, more than 749 people, out of which 85 per cent are females received online consultations by GBV mobile teams on issues related to domestic violence (56 per cent out of all cases) and other issues.

In Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts in the non-government-controlled areas (NGCA), UNICEF and local partner organizations continued to provide child protection services and PSS to children and their caregivers residing in the conflict-affected communities near the LoC. Through the Community Protection Centres and via mobile outreach, UNICEF provided around 1,558 children and caregivers with PSS and another 632 with awareness-raising activities, targeting the prevention of violence and GBV. Also, more than 400 community professionals and caregivers were trained on PSS and positive parenting. Moreover, in NGCA more than 1,300 children and caregivers were reached out with MRE messages.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF leads the WASH cluster and Child Protection sub-cluster, and co-leads the Education Cluster. UNICEF is also actively participating in the Health Cluster and Mine Action working group. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNICEF and each co-Lead Agency at Country level to guide effective and efficient Coordination and ensure clear roles and responsibilities of each party. UNICEF also participates in the in-country interagency PSEA Task Force.

Communication

UNICEF continues to highlight the situation of children and families trapped in the six year long volatile conflict in eastern Ukraine in its communication with local and international media, as well as across local and global digital platforms.

Marking the World Poetry Day (21 March), UNICEF Ukraine joined the Poems for Peace initiative, activated by the UNICEF to provide a platform for children and young people affected by conflict to express themselves and have their voices heard. More than 300 Ukrainian young people from Donetsk and Luhansk region, have shared powerful and emotive poems calling for peace in the national poetry contest, announced by UNICEF Ukraine. Using clips from the individual videos, UNICEF has created a short film creating one powerful poem out of the best ten poems submitted by Ukrainian youth. The local version of the project, created under global initiative, was largely supported by Ukrainian poets and celebrities and resulted in over 700,000 views across social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)).

In early March, UNICEF Ukraine hosted a media mission of the Finnish National Committee for UNICEF. The mission visited frontline communities in eastern Ukraine to document needs of families and UNICEF response. It is planned that multimedia assets produced during the mission will be released during telethon and via Finnish national media platforms. As a result of the mission, [an extensive feature](#) was published in one of the most popular Finnish foreign news publications.

To mark the Mine Awareness Day, UNICEF prepared [a feature story](#) focusing on child mine victims and results of the Mine Victim Assistance Programme in Ukraine. UNICEF Ukraine video content produced on a child mine survivor was picked up by Henrietta H. Fore, [UNICEF Executive Director's Twitter account](#) to advocate for this pressing issue on International Mine Awareness Day.

UNICEF Ukraine continues to raise the visibility of children living along the contact line, through its social media platforms reaching over 165,000 people with daily updates.

Next SitRep: 15 July 2020

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Annex A

Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Cluster/Sector Response ²			UNICEF and IPs		
	2020 target	Total results	Change since last report ▲ ▼	2020 target	Total results	Change since last report ▲ ▼
Health						
Number of mothers and children U5 benefit from direct health service provision	N/A	N/A		20,000	139	▲
WASH						
Number of people accessing a sufficient quantity of water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	1,000,000	185,182	▲	800,000	164,526	▲
Number of people provided with critical WASH related supplies and/or awareness	100,000	16,902	▲	70,000	13,603	▲
Number of people provided with improved access to adequate sanitation	175,000	18,008	▲	15,000	16,496	▲
Child Protection						
Number of children and their families receiving mine risk education	N/A	N/A		150,000	1,391	▲
Number of boys, girls, and caregivers reached with psycho-social support	N/A	8,409	▲	30,000	5,056	▲
Number of community professionals gained enhanced capacity on child protection	N/A	775	▲	5,000	499	▲
Number of children and women accessing GBV risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions	N/A	N/A		5,000	2,380	▲
Education						
Number of girls and boys benefitting from education and early learning supplies and inclusive schools and kindergartens	120,000	9,011	▲	36,500	2,295	▲
Number of girls and boys benefitting from conflict-sensitive, risk-informed and life-skills education	44,350	8,361	▲	13,000	8,341	▲
HIV/AIDS						
Number of people living with HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis provided with financial support through cash or vouchers for health care expenses	N/A	N/A		1,000	596	▲
Number of HIV-affected children provided with continuous care and support services	N/A	N/A		600	N/A ³	

² For some indicators the cluster data was not available at the time of the reporting or no cluster target is available.

³ The response programme did not yet start at the time of the reporting due to lack of funding.

Annex B

Funding Status*

Sector	Requirements \$	Funds available \$		Funding gap	
		Received Current Year	Carry-Over	\$	%
Health	610,000	0	78	609,922	100
WASH	3,700,000	904,985	322,809	2,472,205	67
Child Protection	2,000,000	253,800	244,893	1,501,307	75
Education	2,424,000		356,700	2,067,300	85
HIV/AIDS	500,000		271	499,729	100
Cluster Coordination	600,000	610,445	387,060	0	0
Total	9,834,000	1,769,231	1,311,812	7,150,462	73

* As defined in Humanitarian Appeal of December 2019 for a period of 12 months