



## UKRAINE | WINTER RESPONSE PLAN 2025-2026

### KEY FIGURES AT A GLANCE



**\$115 million** overall  
financial requirements for UNHCR's  
2025-2026 winter response



Working with **14 partners**  
including **13 national NGOs**, in  
coordination with the **Government  
of Ukraine**, and contributing to the  
broader [Inter-agency Winter  
Response Plan](#)



Kharkiv city in east Ukraine. @ UNHCR/Iryna Tymchyshyn

### CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

- As millions of people in Ukraine brace themselves for the fourth winter since the Russian full-scale invasion began, UNHCR is planning to deliver critical assistance during the 2025-2026 winter to help war-affected people stay safe and warm in their homes. **UNHCR will deliver its winter response in close cooperation with the Government of Ukraine and partners, as part of the broader [inter-agency winter response plan](#)**, and will prioritise war-affected people with specific vulnerabilities.
- UNHCR's response will prioritize people living in frontline regions, where the needs are particularly severe. The [REACH Cold Spot Risk Assessment 2025-2026](#) found that the areas most affected by cold in winter are predominantly located in the east and north of Ukraine, where the hostilities remain most intense and destruction is extensive. The harsh winter conditions in these areas are compounded by the combination of war-related damage, disrupted power infrastructure, and heightened socio-economic vulnerabilities (including older people, people with disabilities, and people with chronic illnesses). With the prospect of continued large-scale attacks against Ukraine's energy infrastructure this upcoming winter season, people will struggle to remain safe and warm in their homes as energy prices and household expenditures soar.
- Early investments in winter assistance are more crucial than ever, given the current uncertain funding outlook for humanitarian programmes. The timely delivery of winter assistance before the coldest months set in is critical if people are to remain safe and warm in their homes and avoid being forced to relocate as temperatures drop.
- A people-centred approach and strong protection-based referrals underpin UNHCR's overall winter response, particularly in ensuring the most vulnerable receive the assistance they need to remain safe and warm in homes or temporary accommodation during the winter. Access to psychosocial support, legal aid, and protection accompaniment are therefore cross-cutting elements of UNHCR's winter plan.

### MAIN RESPONSE AREAS

#### 1. CASH ASSISTANCE FOR WINTER NEEDS - \$100 million

In collaboration with the **Ministry of Social Policy and the Pension Fund of Ukraine**, UNHCR will provide cash assistance to help people cover winter-specific needs, such as solid fuel and warm clothing. The assistance will be prioritized to people living in areas up to 20 km from the frontline and/or border, followed by vulnerable people living in other war-affected regions as defined by Government priorities. The transfer value of the winter assistance for the 2025-2026 winter response is **UAH 19,400 per household**, in line with the Shelter/NFI Cluster recommendations calculated based on the Government's assessment of household winter needs, and agreed with the Ministry of Social Policy.



**359,000** people to receive cash assistance for winter-specific needs

#### 2. SHELTER, HOUSING & IN-KIND ENERGY SUPPORT - \$15 million

UNHCR will continue to provide shelter and housing support to help people keep their homes warm. This includes: (1) **the distribution of "Rapid Thermal Kits"** for private houses, apartments and Collective Sites (CS) consisting of heaters and materials used by families to insulate their homes, such as reflective insulation screens, transparent plastic sheets, foam strips, and building tape; (2) **insulation of sub-standard houses, apartments and CS** to improve their capacity to retain warmth, reduce heating costs and save energy through insulating roofs and attics, installation of doors and modern triple glazed windows and fixing damages; and (3) **provision and installation of solid fuel heaters** in frontline hromadas where access to electricity is a challenge. This winter, UNHCR will also support the **insulation of heating pipes and upgrading of heating systems** to minimize costs associated with utilities in communal settings – mostly collective sites.



**30,200** people to be supported with better insulated homes and living spaces

In addition, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy, local authorities, community-based organizations, and partners, UNHCR will provide **alternative energy units such as portable power stations (already in stock)** to selected institutions providing critical social services, as well as to critical communal infrastructure. Support will also be provided to those most at risk of harm in the event of a power outage and lack of heating, including older people, people with disabilities, and large foster families.



## SUMMARY FINDINGS | POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING 2024-2025 WINTER RESPONSE

Post distribution monitoring (PDM) is a core-component of UNHCR's ongoing effort to ensure accountability to those we serve and our donors, understand the impact of our interventions, and to adapt and improve our response in future. The **key findings from the 2024-2025 winter response PDM** have been crucial in informing the 2025-2026 winter planning:

- **Cash assistance is impactful, helped people stay warm, and remains the preferred modality of assistance (among recipients) for winter support:** PDM results from the 2024-2025 winter response show that the majority of recipients, **89%** of respondents, spent the cash assistance on solid fuel. UNHCR's cash assistance also contributed to an overall improvement in living conditions, as noted by **83%** of respondents. Overall, **87%** of households surveyed reported that UNHCR's assistance enabled them to cover most of their heating needs during the winter season (for three months or more). Cash remains the preferred form of assistance for **85.5%** of respondents, followed by a combination of cash and in-kind support (10.5%). Among those who preferred in-kind assistance, concerns about rising prices or insufficient cash amounts were the most common.
- Similarly to the previous winter, the PDM found that **markets throughout the country remained resilient and relatively well-supplied** – with winter cash giving people agency to prioritize what to buy and supporting local businesses and suppliers. **97%** of respondents indicated that markets in their area were functioning, and **94%** were able to find items or services of acceptable quality.
- **Winter home repairs and insulation works enhanced the safety and dignity of families during winter:** Based on a survey across six regions, most families (**87%**) assessed the quality of winter home repair works and the materials used to be good or very good. Respondents indicated a range of works were provided including installation/replacement of windows and doors; roof insulation; roof and ceiling repair/insulation; wall repair; house insulation; and installation of a balcony block (separating a living space from a balcony), among others. **87%** of surveyed households reported being able to live in safe and dignified conditions as a result of the assistance received. Importantly, **94%** said their housing now provides protection from cold, dampness, sun, rain, wind, or other health hazards.
- **Rapid Thermal Kits (RTKs) had a positive impact and helped people insulate their homes during winter:** Families across several regions consistently reported high satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of the kit (**85-99%** depending on the region). PDM findings indicate that the RTKs significantly improved living conditions during winter, especially for older people and vulnerable groups. Most families actively used the majority of items in the kit, improving home insulation before winter. Distribution and monitoring processes were also found to be effective, demonstrating the feasibility, relevance and relatively high impact of this low-cost programme.



Vira and Mykola, both 75 years old, are pensioners and live in Shevchenkove village in Mykolaivska oblast in southern Ukraine. Their village was severely impacted by shelling and hostilities from the very beginning of the full-scale invasion in 2022.

Vira and Mykola received support to repair their war-damaged home through UNHCR and its local NGO partner Caritas. They were enrolled in the cash-for-repair programme, which allowed them to buy materials and pay for professionals to help with the work. The couple received additional support ahead of the winter 2024-2025, as Caritas helped them insulate their house to make it warmer and reduce the amount of firewood needed to heat it up.

"It is thanks to the support we received that we are even able to now be back in our own home and stay warm. We are very happy about this, but now I just want the war to end," says Vira.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit Ukraine's **Operational Data Portal** for more information products [here](#).
- **Ukraine Protection Cluster Response Dashboard** can be found [here](#).
- **CCCM Cluster Collective Sites Mapping** [here](#)
- **Shelter Cluster Response Dashboard** [here](#).

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