

UKRAINE

Situation report No.37 as of 24 April 2015



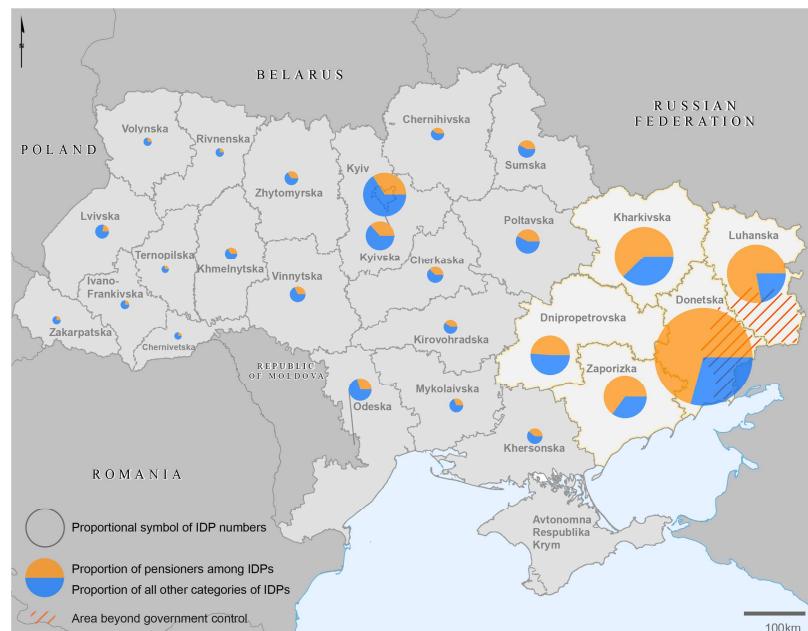
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This report is produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period of 18 - 24 April 2015, unless otherwise noted. The next report will be published on or around 1 May.

Highlights¹

- Protection cluster partners are receiving reports of people being harmed in incidents related to landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Cluster partners are gathering data on the number of casualties.
- Conflict-affected people have difficulty accessing health care services and markets due to burdensome bureaucratic travel requirements.
- The Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) extended the validity of registration certificates enabling IDPs to access social services and benefits. However, partners indicate that the authorities on the ground need clear instructions from Kyiv as in some cases they misinterpret the new directive.
- Funding for humanitarian operations remains low: only 21 percent of the US\$316 required for Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2015 is funded or pledged.



1.2 million registered IDPs

Source: MoSP

Situation Overview

On 20 April, United Nations Secretary-General (SG) Ban Ki-moon and President of Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko discussed in a telephone conversation the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine and continuing international efforts to mediate a peace in the region. The SG and President Poroshenko agreed on the need for the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements. The SG stressed the urgent need for traction on the political elements of these agreements for the betterment of the humanitarian situation on the ground.

By 20 April, MoSP had registered 1,236,495 IDPs in Ukraine. This is an increase of 8,400 people compared to the previous week. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), by 24 April, close to 801,000 Ukrainians had sought asylum, residence permits or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries. This includes 659,143 individuals in Russia, 81,044 individuals in Belarus and another 47,589 individuals in Poland.

MoSP data indicates that about 60 per cent of the 1.2 million registered IDPs are pensioners. The map above illustrates a higher percentage of pensioners amongst registered IDPs in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Not all of the pensioners are senior citizens as people can retire from the age of 35, according to Ukraine's labour code.

During the reporting period, the intensity of armed hostilities in major flashpoints of the conflict area in eastern Ukraine - vicinity of the Donetsk airport and the village of Shyrokyne in Donetsk region - decreased considerably compared to the previous week. However, armed clashes and exchanges between the Ukrainian armed forces

¹ The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Internal Displacement data was provided by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine as of 6 April 2015.

and armed groups continued to be reported on a daily basis, including those with the use of artillery, mortars, tanks and small arms. Since mid-April 2014, 6,225 people have been documented as killed and 15,511 as wounded in the conflict zone of eastern Ukraine. This includes 175 children who were killed and 66 children wounded as a result of the conflict².

The protection cluster has received reports of people being harmed in incidents related to landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs). According to reports, certain percentage of shells used by both parties remains unexploded and poses potential UXO threat. This is further exacerbated by the threat of landmines as a number of areas have reportedly been mined. A recommendation to establish the Mine Action sub-cluster under the Protection Cluster has been submitted to the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Meanwhile, cluster partners are gathering data on the number of casualties.

On 16 April, the Deputy Minister of Social Policy signed a directive extending the validity of IDP certificates. These certificates enable IDPs to continue receiving pensions, access social benefits, obtain treatment for chronic diseases and apply for state housing and were initially issued for six months. The new directive stipulates that if the personal information and status of an IDP has been changed since the initial registration, then the new certificate with updated information shall be issued. This has reportedly created some confusion at the local level as some districts have not received official notification for the extension, while others are awaiting further guidance on the procedure to be followed.

Meanwhile, the MoSP and protection cluster partners reported that from 1 May 2015 IDPs from Donetska and Luhanska oblasts that currently live in rented accommodations will be entitled to receive subsidies for utilities. However, IDPs might face obstacle with some landlords who may be reluctant to draft legal rental agreements due to tax scrutiny concerns. Protection partners will continue to monitor the situation.

Lengthy procedures for obtaining passes to cross the contact line between government-controlled and non-government controlled areas as well as passing through checkpoints (located in government-controlled areas) are a major concern. For instance, Protection Cluster reports that a coordination centre for issuing passes in Velyka Novosilka, Donetska oblast, receives 1,000 applications per day. Applications have to be electronically registered and processed by an office that lacks equipment and has six staff members, thus making it impossible to deliver passes within 10 days as announced. Currently those people, who submitted the documents on 25 February, are getting their passes. Since the introduction of the temporary order on passes, this coordination centre had processed 93,000 applications and another 54,000 are yet to be processed. These procedures severely affect the ability of local population to access health care services in a timely manner. Civilians residing in non-government controlled areas encounter difficulties while commuting to government-controlled areas to buy food items, medicines and other necessities as the prices in non-government controlled areas are reported to be significantly higher.

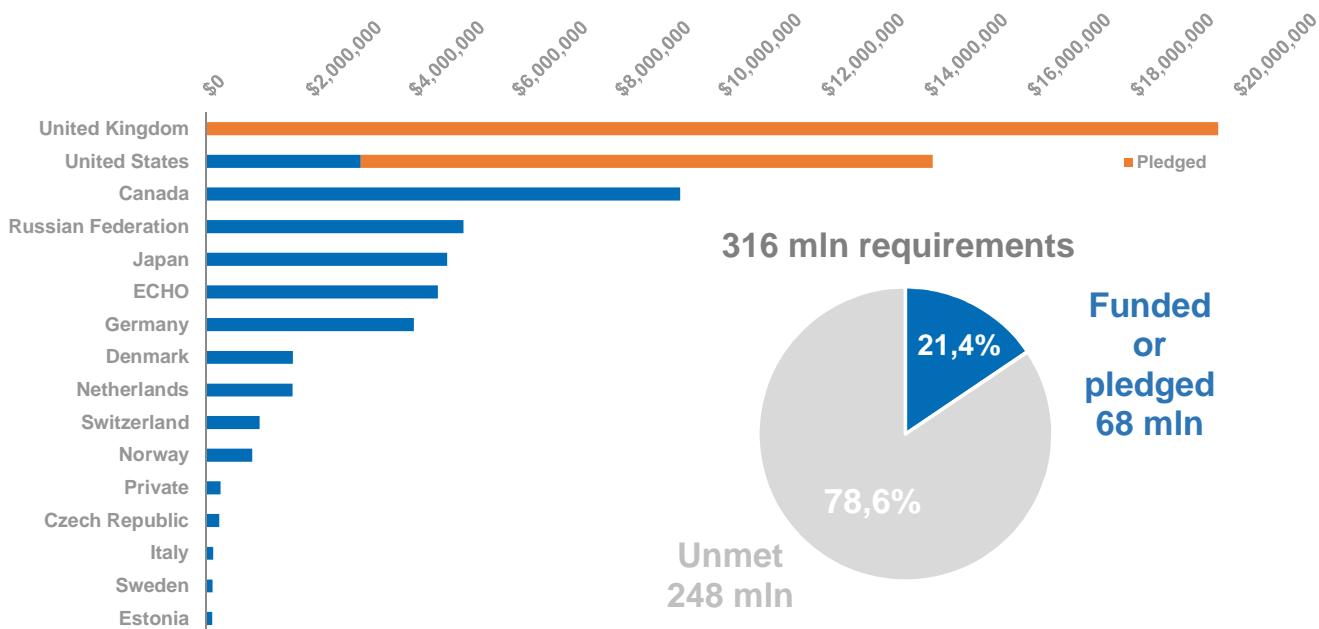
On 17 April, the Parliamentary Committee on Veteran Affairs, Combatants, Members of ATO (Anti-Terroristic Operation) and People living with Disabilities established a working group to draft a new comprehensive law on humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. The international humanitarian community, including UN agencies, is supporting the Working Group in an advisory capacity, with focus on global best practices that can be adapted to the Ukrainian context. This new law is expected to facilitate the work of humanitarian organisations, remove all current bureaucratic hurdles and other impediments as well as expedite the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The new law will be drafted in line with international standards and principles. The Working Group is scheduled to have its first meeting on 27 April in the capital, Kyiv.

Funding

Following the launch of the revised HRP 2015 for Ukraine on 25 February, which appeals to the generosity of the international community to fund life-saving activities targeting 3.2 million people across Ukraine, as of 24 April donors funded or pledged around US\$67.6 million, or 21 percent of the \$316 million required for 2015. Low level of funding coupled with a dearth of implementing partners or the vast variety of localised community-based aid groups on the ground in some locations prevent many clusters from expanding their activities to meet the needs of thousands of people in need.

² 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 Donetska and Luhanska Oblasts: civilians and some members of the armed groups. The HRMU and WHO believe that the actual numbers of fatalities are considerably higher.

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.



Source: Financial Tracking System (FTS)

Humanitarian Response

On 23 April, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that a convoy of 62 vehicles from the Russian Federation arrived in areas beyond Government control to deliver humanitarian aid. According to the Permanent Representation of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, the convoy delivered more than 1,400 metric tonnes (MT) of food, firefighting equipment and books.



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

Needs:

- Miners of the Donbas region in the east of the country report about arrears in salary payments for the past several months. Governor of Donetsk oblast Alexander Kikhtenko said the arrears amount up to 600 million Ukrainian Hryvnia (UAH) – equivalent to US\$ 26.7 million - noting, however, that these arrears are gradually being paid.
- Governor Kikhtenko estimated that there is a need for 3.5 UAH billion (\$155 million) to fund recovery activities in Donetsk oblast.
- It has been reported that three state mines will be closed in Donbas. The Minister of Coal Mining Industry Vladimir Demchyshyn said that 11 out of 35 state-owned mines in the area are not financially sustainable. Thousands of coal-miners, predominantly from the Donbas region, have staged peaceful demonstrations over the past week in the capital Kyiv, demanding arrears to be paid and state mines not to be closed.

Response:

- During the reporting period, 43 IDPs were provided with micro-enterprise development grants to jump start micro businesses in Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv and Ternopil.
- Overall, by 22 April implementing partners have conducted 52 self-employment trainings for around 1,225 IDPs (cumulative figure since January 2015).
- In addition, 480 applications were received after the call for proposal on salary compensation schemes for entrepreneurs.
- Legal support on business re-registration was provided to 51 IDPs from Luhanska and Donetsk oblasts and Crimea.
- Between 6 March and 5 April, the Donbas SOS hotline for IDPs run by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) received 3,511 calls. Over 93 per cent of calls were related to information requests,

including inquiries about governmental agencies, NGOs and INGOs that provide support to IDPs (23 per cent), regarding access to basic services (15 per cent), legal and other concerns (16 per cent).

Gaps & Constraints:

- Access to non-government controlled territories remains an issue and impedes deployment of early recovery and livelihoods projects.
- Cash assistance to non-government controlled territories is significantly hampered by the lack of financial institutions and insecurity.



Education (cluster coordinator: Rekha Das, redas@unicef.org)

Needs:

- The Education Cluster is still collecting data on schools (including damaged schools) and enrolment of IDP and host community children as well as estimating the number of out-of-school children to get a better overview of needs and gaps.
- A recent mission to the city of Donetsk found that 130,271 children are enrolled in 485 schools in non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast. More than 100 schools have suffered various types and levels of conflict-related damage. Education Cluster is analysing the scale and nature of damages using the data available. Main needs are roofing material and window glass.
- Public school buses are running in several districts of non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast. There is still a shortage or no school buses in Debaltseve, Dokutsaevsk, the village of Yasne (outside Dokuchaievsk), Nikishyne and surrounding villages. This is also the case in Donetskyi settlement of non-government controlled areas of Luhanska oblast. This reportedly impacts access to education for some 40-50 students and teachers.
- Schoolteachers in non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast received their salaries due from December 2014 only this month.
- In government-controlled areas of Donetska oblast, the Department of Education said that fresh statistics on enrolment will not be collected now as the school year ends in May. The Luhanska oblast Department of Education reports that they will collect enrolment data by the end of April. There are still reports from a number of locations, including Kharkiv, that IDP children do not enroll in school because their parents expect to return to their area of origin before the new school year begins in September 2015.
- There are also some reports that discrimination and bullying is keeping IDP children out of school. The national NGO Human Home (Kharkiv) reported five cases of discrimination of IDP children in schools.

Response:

- In non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast the de-facto authorities report that children in schools are provided with one free school meal a day consisting of canned food and cereals. With scarcity of food products and high prices, this helps to keep children in school.
- 10,000 sets of mine-risk education materials produced by UNICEF and to be distributed in schools in non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast are on their way to final destinations.
- Education Cluster will continue to examine the problem of discrimination and bullying of IDP children and advocate to intensify the response.
- Several organisations in government-controlled areas are working with IDP children to 'catch up' on missed classes. The volunteer organisation Education Initiative (Kharkiv) provides free courses and catch-up classes in Ukrainian language, math and physics to students, including IDP students. Volunteers work with the students at the local library and help them prepare for final school exams (16-17 years). So far, 25 students are benefitting from extra courses. Caritas (Kharkiv) is also organising alternative classes for out-of-school children to help them join school and catch up on missed subjects.
- Education cluster partners in non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast discussed the issue of transport for children. Transporting children in some of the affected areas involves safety and security concerns. Despite the recognition that education is a right to every child, humanitarian organisations in parts of Donetska oblast that operate in non-government controlled areas expressed apprehension about supporting activities that could put children and their families at risk. A detailed security assessment of the areas is needed. Education partners discussed the possibility of strengthening distance learning in the area. A solution to the problem has not yet been found.
- Open Policy Foundation continues to promote the examination of children that fled from non-government controlled areas to government-controlled areas. Open Policy Foundation has helped to deliver 2,500 copies of the leaflet "I want to enter the university in Ukraine: six steps to the goal" to Sieverodonetsk. Another 1,200 copies were sent to Dymytrov, Krasnyi Lyman, Dobropillia, Sloviansk, Novohrodivka, Artemivsk, Mariupol, Kostiantynivka, Kramatorsk, Odesa and Lviv. In addition, instruction material on movement of students has been sent to all regional Departments of Education, as per the letter from the

Ministry of Education and Science. A one-click roadmap for the school leavers from non-government controlled areas on the rules for crossing the “contact line” is placed on the Ministry website.

- Humanitarian partners in Kyiv have raised protection concerns related to the movement of children for examination purposes with the Ministry of Education and Science.

Gaps & Constraints:

- To have a complete overview of how many students are out of school remains a challenge amid frequent movements of IDP families who often do not deregister from the regional IDP list when they move.
- Finalising assessment of damaged education facilities and education needs in non-government controlled areas is needed, but issues and limitations regarding access and presence of partners are major challenges.
- To obtain a broader picture of all humanitarian actors involved in education is a challenge due to the vast variety and geographical spread of these actors as well as their presence, activities and capacity.



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

Needs:

- In zones 4 and 5 (parts of Ukraine that are further away from the conflict-affected oblast) needs for shelter and basic non-food items (NFIs) remain unmet. As available civil society resources become scarce and humanitarian organisations focus on the east, it leaves several areas with high concentration of IDPs (Kyiv city and region, Odesa region) without assistance.
- Need for coordination in non-government controlled areas in Donetsk city was reported.
- South of Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (non-government controlled areas) are yet to be reached with assistance and/or less covered comparing to other areas.

Response:

- Within Emergency Shelter/NFI Cluster, partners started working on harmonising questionnaires for post-distribution monitoring of cash assistance to ensure better comparability of the results during the next round. The Cluster together with five partners (UNHCR, ADRA, IOM, People in Need and Caritas) has prepared the first release of the Summary Report on the cash assistance post-distribution monitoring. The report can be accessed at the following link http://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/draft_pdm_report_final_v2_3-k1_pages.pdf.
- During the reporting period, 1,630 individuals residing in government-controlled areas have received NFIs (bedding and clothes).
- IOM has furnished and equipped rooms in an orphanage that hosts 30 IDP children with disabilities in the Ternopil area.
- NGO People in Need has delivered roofing and other reconstruction materials (donated by UNHCR) to 202 families in the Slovyansk area.
- Although procedure not yet defined, village councils in Lviv region and authorities in Odesa shown strong interest in offering land plots and other facilities for IDPs.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Over the last month, Emergency Shelter/NFI Cluster has observed that many organisations finalized 2014 projects and are awaiting further funding to assist IDPs and population of concern. This creates a vacuum and significant decrease in the deliveries of emergency assistance, especially in non-government controlled areas.



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

Needs:

- A detailed assessment of the farming needs and damages in the agriculture sector in the Donetska and Luhanska oblasts is ongoing. According to preliminary information, the number of families in need of agricultural inputs is increasing compared to the findings of the previously conducted Rapid Needs Assessment.
- The activities of small, medium and large farms have been badly affected and there is no sign of crop cultivation. There is a high likelihood of farmers not being able to cultivate their land in conflict-affected areas due to many concerns, including safety and security risks. How many hectares of land have been affected and not cultivated is being verified.
- Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) is reporting that there are 157,572 officially registered IDPs in Kharkiv Oblast (1,395 of them pregnant women) in need of food parcels, baby food and other food commodities.

Response:

- During the reporting period, food security cluster partners have distributed one month food rations for 3,000 people in a number of locations in non-government controlled areas in Donetska oblast.
- Cluster partners distributed food vouchers to 200 IDPs in Sievierodonetsk enabling them to buy food and meet their food needs for a month.
- In addition, 52 families in Kharkiv were provided with 30kg food packages that will cover their food needs for one month.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Food security partners are looking at expanding operations and prioritizing the most vulnerable population in the conflict-affected oblasts.
- Food needs in those oblasts are a priority amid reduced access to markets and severely reduced coping mechanisms. This is mainly due to the low funding levels and funding gap seems to be growing versus upcoming plan to extend operations.



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

Needs

- During the reporting period, an assessment of Lysychansk Oblast Psychiatric Hospital in government-controlled areas of Luhanska oblast was undertaken. There is a need for qualified staff. A possible increase in terms of prevalence of the post-traumatic stress disorders is a concern. This is particularly of concern within a long term perspective, as this may require capacity building of mental health and psychosocial support facilities.
- Focus group discussion with IDPs in Kharkiv Oblast showed that the following poor practices are prevalent in terms of infant and young child feeding: giving of water and tea to children aged between 0-5 months old, introduction of complementary food before six months of age and delay in introduction of iron-reach foods. Nutrition Sub-Cluster will be reviewing its communication materials to address these issues.
- Assessment of the needs of vulnerable ethnic minority groups (770 Crimean Tatars, 25 Meskhetian Turks and 295 Roma people) was conducted among the IDPs in Genichesk, Novoaleksivka, and in the cities of Kherson and Kharkiv. Preliminary findings suggest that these vulnerable groups do not have the same level of access to health care services and social support as other IDPs.

Response:

- 2,484 consultations for IDPs and host communities were provided over the past week by four Mobile Emergency Primary Health-care Units (MEPUs) in Mariupol, Donetska oblast and nine teams in Sievierodonetsk (Luhanska oblast), Sloviansk, Sviatohirsk and Krasnyi Lyman (Donetska oblast), Kupiansk, Izium (Kharkiv oblast), Zaporizhzhia city (Zaporizhzhia oblast), Pavlohrad and Dniprozherzhynsk, Dnipropetrovsk oblast.
- One new MEPU was launched in Krasnyi Lyman (Donetska oblast) to be run by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society.
- Nutrition Sub-Cluster has defined composition of complementary food basket for children 6-23 and is looking for partners to implement complementary food distribution for children 6-23 months in non-government controlled area.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Passing through checkpoints (located between villages and towns within government-controlled areas) severely impedes access of local population to health care services.
- Lack of funding remains main challenge hampering cluster partners' efforts to meet growing health and nutritional needs of infants and young children. Limited nutrition in emergencies expertise in the country further impacts availability for scaling up the programmes.
- Up to date information on nutritional needs of children aged 0-23 months is missing. Nutrition Sub-Cluster is planning to conduct assessments in Donetska, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts in May-June to address this gap.
- International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine reported legal constraints in the delivery of narcotic drugs for Opiate Substitution Treatment (OST) patients (since December 2014) in non-government controlled areas of Donetska and Luhanska oblasts that resulted in discontinuation of OST for almost 700 patients residing in the area..



Protection (cluster co-coordinators: Christine Goyer, goyer@unhcr.org; Fiona Frazer, ffrazer@ohchr.org) – see also overview

Needs:

- Protection partners continue to monitor the need for social payments and pensions in non-government controlled areas. As previously reported the de-facto authorities in parts of Luhanska oblast beyond government control continue to disburse payments of pensions.
- During the reporting period, protection partners interviewed a number of Donetsk city residents, who confirmed that pensions were being paid. However, it was reported that there is not enough cash to pay all pensions. For instance in Stakhanov town, pensioners started protesting near the post office, demanding the de-facto authorities to pay their pensions. The demonstration was dispersed by the so-called ‘popular police’ force. The situation needs to be closely monitored to better understand the capacity of the local bodies to implement the announced procedures and how people can access the pensions, ensure non-discriminatory access, criteria for prioritization of payments, as well as if the payments will continue in the coming months.
- There are reports from Northern Donetsk about long queues in Migration Service offices, with people spending several days to get the stamp. It is especially difficult for mothers with small children, elderly people and those people who live in remote areas.
- Protection Cluster partners report about the difficulties faced by families separated between the government-controlled and non-government controlled areas. With serious limitations to the freedom of movement, single-parent IDP families have found themselves in particularly difficult socio-economic situations. IDP women are often unable to search for employment or any other short-term income possibilities as they have to provide daily care for their children due to limited reception capacity of day-care centers or any other institutionalized care of pre-school children throughout the region.

Response:

- IDPs report to protection partners a need for information regarding entitlements and procedures. In an effort to meet those needs, the Luhansk Regional Center for Youth Initiatives Support created a practical information tool (“IDP’s City Map”) for newly arrived IDPs to the town of Lysychansk providing general information for all IDPs and/or conflict-affected persons regarding registration, job opportunities, places and schedule of humanitarian aid distributions, relevant phone numbers of local authorities and aid agencies. Similar leaflets could be found in the so-called “Trolleybus for IDPs” in the city of Sieverodonetsk.

Gaps & Constraints

- The issue of freedom of movement for civilians continues to be a major concern for local residents on either side of the line of contact.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (cluster lead: Silvia Ramos, washcluster.ukraine@gmail.com)

Needs:

- WASH cluster is exploring the feasibility of conducting a WASH baseline survey in the affected areas of government and non-government-controlled areas in Luhanska and Donetska oblasts. A similar (baseline survey) activity by the Shelter cluster will help to contextualise the WASH baseline assessment findings.
- Damage to water supply networks has been identified in several locations in Luhanska oblast (Pervomaisk, Kirovsk, Bryanka and Stakhanov). This resulted in poor or limited access to water supply system. Most rural areas are yet to be assessed to evaluate the extent of the damage to water supply networks.
- The water supply through the Siverskyi Donets water canal in Mariupol has been cut due to damaged pipes. Currently, Mariupol city is getting water from Starokrymske water reservoir.
- There is no central water supply in Krasnohorivka of Donetska oblast.
- There is a high demand for both diapers and hygiene kits amongst IDPs in Kharkiv. Access to water, including drinking water, is insufficient in collective centers in the Kharkiv area. According to MoSP, there are close to 163,000 registered IDPs in Kharkiv oblast, including about 19,000 children.

Response:

- WASH partners are providing chemical supplies for water treatment in five water stations of Donetsk oblast (Krasnoarmiisk, Velykoanadolsk, Artemivsk, Chasiv Yar and Sloviansk). Close to 1 million people will benefit from treated water supplied through these stations.
- Distribution of hygiene kits amongst the most vulnerable people was conducted in Sloviansk, Sviatohirsk, Druzhkivka and Bilozeresk in Donetska oblast, benefiting a total of 558 children, 900 adults and 1,029 families.

- Cluster partners have initiated a project to assist the most vulnerable IDPs and host communities, as well as returnees in government-controlled and non-government controlled areas of Luhanska oblast. The project will support 500 children with hygiene kits for four months. The project will target the districts of Popasna, Lysychansk, Sievierodonetsk, Pervomaisk, Novoaidar and Luhansk city.
- State Sanitary and Epidemiological Service of Ukraine (SSES), a WASH cluster co-chair, conducted 36 water monitoring visits during the past week. These visits were aimed at assessing the quality of water and mitigating the risk of the spread of water-borne diseases. The monitoring took place in government-controlled areas, including Sloviansk, Kostiantynivka, Dzerzhynsk, Artemivsk, Dobropillia, Sviatohirsk, Mykolaiivka, Bilozerske, Kramatorsk, Chervonoarmiisk, Bilytske, and Krasnyi Lyman. So far, 114 bacteriological and physical analysis tests from water sources used by IDPs (in all the above mentioned locations) were conducted. Three samples out of the 114 did not meet standards and immediate actions were taken to ensure access to safe water for the displaced people.

Gaps & Constraints:

- The need for diapers for elderly people is not met.
- Lack of water truck capacity to cover water supply needs in critical areas in non-government-controlled parts of Donetsk oblast.
- No WASH cluster partners are represented in Kharkiv.



Logistics (cluster lead: Matthew Serventy, matthew.serventy@wfp.org)

Response:

- A preliminary agreement has been reached with the Ukrainian military for the provision of a “humanitarian lane” for Logistics Cluster cargoes at the crossing point in Kurakhove. A Logistics Cluster representative will need to escort the cargo at the checkpoint.
- Logistics Cluster shared with UN OCHA a paper on how to assist in negotiations in streamlining access and procedures for humanitarian cargo. The paper includes suggestions on how to improve the procedures, i.e.: express humanitarian lane; single point of contact at checkpoint; simplified and clarified documentation; appointment of a contact person from MoSP to facilitate communication with humanitarian organisations; Logistics Cluster representative on behalf of humanitarian partners (which are still to be registered); opening two further cargo access routes from Mariupol and Sieverodonetsk.
- A package with instructions on how to fill the Service Request Form and updated SOPs is being prepared by the Logistic Cluster and will soon be posted on the Logistics Cluster web-site to facilitate the application process for partners.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Access for humanitarian movement into non-government controlled areas remains challenging in terms of limited crossing points, security risks and complicated paperwork.

Coordination

- At a general coordination meeting held on 24 April in Kyiv, humanitarian partners raised concerns about the plight of affected civilians in Nikishyne, one of the areas most affected by the conflict. Some partners that managed to visit Nikishyne said there was a massive destruction on the ground and affected civilians have not received assistance yet. Clusters will discuss the situation and practical response to these needs at the next Inter-Cluster Coordination meeting next week.
- A technical expert to assist members of the NGO Forum and other humanitarian actors with regard to developing practical suggestions and more related to operational aspects of the new humanitarian law arrived on 24 April to Ukraine. The expert will stay in Ukraine for three weeks and is a resource for all humanitarian organisations on drafting of new humanitarian legislation.
- 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 overview 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.

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 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. An 11 February Minsk II Agreement resulted in general adherence to ceasefire. However, tensions and hostilities remain and pose continued security risks both to local population and humanitarian actors on the ground.

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