

THE PROTECTION CLUSTER INCLUDES SUB-CLUSTERS ON CHILD PROTECTION, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND MINE ACTION



PROTECTION CONCERNS

- **Civilian casualties:** OHCHR recorded seven conflict-related casualties, all caused by mine-related incidents and ERWs.
- **Security:** Following the introduction of a ceasefire agreement on 27 July, the situation along the contact line remains relatively calm.
- **COVID-19:** The number of registered COVID-19 cases in Donetsk and Luhansk GCA doubled from 2,242 in August to 4,561 in September; 1,206 new cases were registered by de-facto authorities in NGCA.

- **Freedom of movement:** On 8 September, around 300 persons were stuck for several hours at the zero-checkpoint at Stanytsia Luhanska EECF due to problems with the 'Diy Vdoma' mobile app. At least 14 persons were refused entry to NGCA and had to stay overnight at the zero-checkpoint, waiting to confirm their place of residence in NGCA.

In September, EECF Novotroitske was open only twice a week, creating a backlog of people waiting to cross the checkpoint. Until 18 September, up to 15 persons stayed the night at the zero-checkpoint, waiting for permission from the de-facto authorities to enter NGCA.

- **Fire in Luhansk region:** On 30 September, fires ignited in the area along the contact line in Luhansk GCA, covering at least 20,000 hectares and affecting 32 settlements. Almost 1,000 persons were evacuated from the area and 250 houses were damaged. On 1 October, due to fires and the detonation of mines/ERWs near EECF Stanytsia Luhanska, the checkpoint was closed, and civilians had to be evacuated from the area.
- **Access to livelihoods:** In Donetsk NGCA, access to livelihoods has deteriorated due to lack of employment opportunities in NGCA, particularly as the COVID-19 lockdown affected access to labour markets in GCA and the Russian Federation; while closure of checkpoints continues to deprive older people from accessing their pensions and social payments in GCA.
- **Access to pension payments:** The residents of Chermalyk, Hranitne, Starohnativka and Novohryhorivka, who have reached retirement age, cannot access their pension as records confirming their employment are in NGCA.
- **Needs assessment:** Focus group discussions conducted by ACCESS Consortium partners in 18 settlements in Donetsk GCA found that key concerns of the local population include poor transport infrastructure, damages to housing as a result of the conflict, lack of centralised gas heating, lack of medical and social workers and lack of knowledge on how to advocate for their rights with the local authorities.

PROTECTION CLUSTER CONTACTS

Anna Rich, Senior Protection Cluster Coordinator, rich@unhcr.org

Kateryna Martynenko, Child Protection Sub-Cluster IM Officer
kmartynenko@unicef.org

Olena Kochemyrovskaya, GBV Sub-Cluster Coordinator
kochemyrovskaya@unfpa.org

Martin Oubrecht, Mine Action Sub-Cluster Coordinator
martin.oubrecht@undp.org

Akbar Nazriev Age and Disability TWG Coordinator
akbar.nazriev@helppage.org

Volodymyr Khorbaladze, Housing, Land and Property TWG Coordinator
volodymyr.khorbaladze@nrc.no

Civilian casualties in Luhansk GCA caused by the wildfire



Source: SESU

HIGHLIGHTS

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- The Ukrainian Red Cross **evacuated 15 immobile persons** from the area of wildfire in Luhansk region, and placed them in temporary accommodation.
- UNHCR, jointly with DDC, **conducted 8 monitoring visits to the EECP Olenivka (Donetsk NGCA)** to observe freedom of movement and ensure protection for civilians crossing the contact line.
- A free electric car at Stanytsia Luhanska checkpoint, run by NGO Proliska, **transported 16,147 people with limited mobility** from the entrance of the checkpoint to the “zero” checkpoint and back.
- NGO Right to Protection **assisted 455 older people at EECPs to install and use the ‘Diy Vdoma’ mobile application**.
- Norwegian Refugee Council provided **legal support, including information, counseling and legal assistance**, to 598 persons; 26% of whom reside in NGCA.
- NGO Donbas SOS **provided 2,052 protection and legal consultations**, 52% of requests related to quarantine restriction measures and 27% to the functioning of the mobile application ‘Diy Vdoma’.
- HelpAge International community volunteers **provided home-based care to 2,047 older people with limited mobility**. During the visits, people received psycho-social support, non-food items and referral services.
- Polish Humanitarian Action, supported by UNICEF, **provided case-management assistance for 67 children and 75 adults**, who suffered from mine/ERW incidents.
- Terre Des Hommes, supported by UNICEF, **conducted PSS sessions for 152 children from 7 communities** located along the contact line.
- Save the Children **provided PSS support to 180 children** through the community center in Krasnohorivka and conducted COVID-19 prevention sessions for 119 persons, including 19 adults and 100 children.
- People in Need’s five PSS mobile teams **provided 140 group and individual PSS sessions** for 301 persons from Yasynuvatskyi, Bachmutskiy, Maryinskyi and Popasnianskiy districts.
- Ukrainian Foundation of Public Health **conducted 3,031 online and phone consultations** for people residing in Donetsk and Luhansk regions; 46% of consultations related to domestic violence, 8% to COVID-19-related issues, 6% to out-of-family violence and 1,2% to bullying.
- UNFPA supported **the opening of the first daycare center for women and children who suffered from domestic violence** in Mariupol. The centre provides psychosocial and legal services and conducts prevention work with perpetrators.

ADVOCACY

- On 17 September 2020, Parliament **adopted Draft Law No.2618 amending the Mine Action Law**. The Law [removes barriers](#) for establishing a national mine action authority, mine action centers, enhances mine victim assistance and extends the capacities of mine action operators. These amendments have been advocated by Protection Cluster partners, the Mine Action Sub-Cluster and the donor community. Mine Action Sub-Cluster partners - DRC-DDG, HALO Ukraine and OSCE PCU, provided comments and recommendations on the draft law and advocated for them with the Parliamentary Committee on National Security, Defense and Intelligence. Additional sub-laws will need to be developed to ensure full implementation of the law and address some remaining concerns. The draft Law has not yet been signed by the President.
- On 17 September, NGO Right to Protection, jointly with UNHCR and with the participation of Donetsk and Luhansk Civil-Military Administrations, **conducted an online presentation of the mid-year monitoring report of the situation at EECPs**, highlighting key concerns related to crossing of the contact line through EECPs during quarantine restrictions and providing recommendations to national and local authorities.

TRAININGS/EVENTS

- In Marinka, the Danish Refugee Council **conducted a round table discussion on the compensation mechanism for housing** destroyed as a result of the conflict, with the participation of local authorities and NGOs. During the event, participants discussed the latest changes in the compensation procedure.

