

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



© E. Kaplin/ As the village of Novooleksandrivka is located between the extreme positions of the conflict sides, the movement of local population is restricted.

●●●● PROTECTION CONCERNS

- **Security situation:** In December 2017, OHCHR recorded 39 conflict-related civilian casualties: 7 people killed and 32 injured. This is a 56 % increase compared to November 2017, and the highest since August 2017.

On December 18, Novoluhankse village (Donetsk GCA) was shelled with heavy artillery 'Grad' rockets, which caused extensive damage to civilian housing and infrastructure. According to the local authorities, 41 private houses, 12 apartment blocks, a hostel, a medical facility, a kindergarten and a school were damaged together with electricity and gas supply lines.

- **Freedom of movement:** De-facto authorities in Donetsk NGCA adopted '[Decree No.363](#)' of 25 December 2017, introducing a temporary prohibition for managers working in the public sector to cross the contact line and undertake visits to the GCA.
- **Villages at the contact line:** At the end of January, **Novooleksandrivka village** (Luhansk GCA) with population of 15 people was taken under the control of armed forces of Ukraine. Gas, electricity, public transport, medical services and stores are not available. During December-January the movement to the GCA was restricted and people could not buy food or access medical services.

Due to the damage of the water pipeline, the level of groundwater continues to rise in the **Chihary village** (Donetsk GCA) with a population of 171 people. Water filled the basements in about 20 houses and they can no longer be used as bomb shelters during shelling. There is a risk that the ground under the houses will sink, as the water from Gagarina mine located under the village was not pumped out due to the conflict.

- **Access to social benefits and pensions:** According to Protection Cluster partner monitoring, Department of Social Protection suspends social payments to the entire IDP family, even if only one family member was found to have violated existing procedures during IDP verification.
- **Access to services:** On 11 January, the services provided by mobile operator Vodafone were interrupted in Donetsk and Luhansk NGCA. While in Luhansk mobile connection was restored on 19 January, in Donetsk it remains unavailable. As Vodafone is the only Ukrainian mobile operator in NGCA, residents in Donetsk NGCA are unable to contact free legal aid hotlines and authorities in GCA. Lack of mobile connection between GCA and NGCA further entrenches the division and deepens the isolation of people residing in NGCA. It also does not allow people, including the elderly, to receive important information about verification visits in GCA, which are a prerequisite to receive social benefits and pensions.

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●●●● HIGHLIGHTS

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- Protection Cluster partners in Donetsk NGCA provided **psychosocial assistance to 1750 beneficiaries** and **legal assistance to 315 beneficiaries**, who included single parents, people with disabilities, IDPs and returnees.
- UNHCR partners implemented **92 community-based projects in Donetsk NGCA**, which included repair of community infrastructure (schools, kindergartens, medical facilities, post office, sport facilities), facilitation of the freedom of movement, strengthening community skills and capacities, and work on increasing the level of resilience and improve communication between IDPs, returnees and the host community.
- HelpAge **distributed 500 anti-bedsore mattresses to people with limited mobility** (Donetsk and Luhansk GCA).
- NRC ICLA **reached 3,495 beneficiaries**: 1604 received information; 1643 beneficiaries received counselling; and 248 legal assistance. NRC Legal Aid Centers in Severodonetsk, Kramatorsk and Stanytsia Luhanska received 808 visitors and 828 hotline calls.
- PAH held a **psychological group session for 43 children** aimed at **rehabilitation and integration of IDP children** to new living conditions in Zaporizhzhya collective center.
- Protection partners operating legal assistance hotlines started opening internet-based contacts in order to reach people residing in Donetsk NGCA in the absence of mobile connection.



ADVOCACY

- Advisors to Ministry of TOT organized a round table in Parliament on **problematic aspects of Ukraine's compliance with IHL provisions**, focusing on pension payments for IDPs and Draft Law 6692.
- OHCHR launched its [20th quarterly report on the human rights situation in Ukraine](#), covering the period from 16 August to 15 November 2017. The report describes the continuing human rights and protection concerns of the civilian population because of the conflict, and warns that armed hostilities began escalating in November.
- R2P and UNHCR organized a round table in Slovyansk to discuss the delay in introduction of amendments to the Order 1085, **listing the settlements where Ukrainian authorities do not exercise their functions**. People displaced from settlements not included in the list cannot register as IDPs and receive IDP assistance.
- Within the framework of the HCT Protection Strategy OHCHR, UNCHR, UNICEF and OCHA prepared a **letter to the Prime Minister of Ukraine** on the issues to be resolved by the Government to promote social cohesion. The letter signed by the Humanitarian Coordinator included **briefing notes, covering the issues of [access to pensions](#), [freedom of movement](#), and [registration of facts of birth](#)**.

TRAININGS/EVENTS

- DRC provided a **training of trainers** in Kramatorsk for social teachers/psychologists from Mariupol, Kramatorsk and Slovyansk vocational schools on **life-skills focused PSS curriculum for youth**.
- HelpAge conducted **three trainings for 57 older persons on diabetes prevention** in Kramatorsk, Slovyansk and Svitlodarsk and a **training for 20 older persons with hearing impairment on healthy nutrition** in Kramatorsk.

KEY FIGURES ON THE PROTECTION RESPONSE IN 2017

	3.3M People in need
	1.85M People targeted
	1.1M People reached
	92 Partners

USEFUL LINKS

[Humanitarian Response 2017 Protection Cluster Dashboard](#)
[Legal Aid Directory Map](#)

PROGRESS ON INDICATORS (Reached HRP)

