

# Operational Update

January 2019

In 2018, UNHCR strengthened its collaboration with state funded **Free Legal Aid Centres (FLAC)** across Ukraine to improve access to legal assistance for persons of concern. Throughout the year, UNHCR trained **371 staff** from FLACs. Referral mechanisms have also been established so that certain cases can be referred to local FLAC offices. In 2018, UNHCR partners referred **277 cases** to FLAC.

Hundreds of thousands of conflict affected people encounter difficulties during the winter when temperatures reach as low as – 30° C. For this reason, UNHCR’s **winterization program** supports the most vulnerable persons living on the ‘contact line’, in particular elderly people who live alone, persons with disabilities and single mothers. To learn more about the personal stories of the beneficiaries of UNHCR winterization support, refer to an article **“This is what it’s like to live through freezing winter in war zone”** on UNHCR website.

In the fifth year of conflict, there is an increasing need for psychosocial support in eastern Ukraine for the people residing along the ‘contact line’. During the reporting period, UNHCR partner *Proliska* organized **253 individual psychosocial consultations** to help conflict affected people deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety and psychological tension.

## KEY INDICATORS

**2,706**

Internally displaced persons (IDP) and other conflict-affected persons have received legal assistance from UNHCR partners in 2019.

**2,500**

Internally displaced persons and other conflict affected persons will receive cash through the individual protection assistance program (IPA) in 2019.

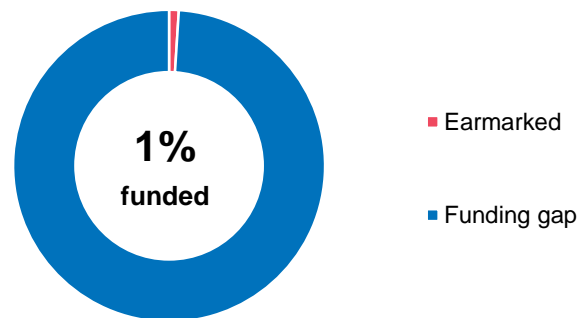
**24**

Households in eastern Ukraine have benefited from UNHCR shelter assistance in 2019.

## FUNDING (AS OF 22 JANUARY)

**USD 28.3 million**

UNHCR’s financial requirements 2019



On 31 January, UNHCR finalized its Winterization Program. UNHCR provided 2,227 vulnerable households with 3 metric tons of coal each. The distribution of coal in eastern Ukraine for the 2018/2019 winter has been made possible thanks to the support and funds provided by the EU’s Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). Thanks to its winterization program, UNHCR was able to expand its humanitarian access to hard-reach areas. This winter, UNHCR reached three conflict affected localities that had been cut off from humanitarian assistance for the last three years.



In government controlled areas, UNHCR provided the most vulnerable residents living along the ‘contact line’ with UAH 10,000 the form of cash. Beneficiaries were then able to choose their preferred winterization support by purchasing warm clothes, coal, heaters, among other supplies. The program targeted persons with heightened protection vulnerabilities, including persons with legal and protection needs, persons with serious medical conditions, unaccompanied or separated children, elderly persons and/or survivors of sexual and gender based violence.

## Operational Highlights

In January 2019, the [OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine \(SMM\)](#) recorded approximately 16,000 ceasefire violations, this was half of the amount recorded in the previous month with four civilian injuries recorded. UNHCR partners were particularly concerned about the escalation witnessed in the last days of the month, with shelling in villages along the 'contact line' happening not only at night, but also during the day. Four apartments in a multi-story building were damaged by shelling in Khutir Vilnyi of Zolote-4 with three houses being damaged in the village of Katerynivka, on the 'contact line'. UNHCR partner's [Proliska](#) responded and provided seven families with emergency repair kits. UNHCR also advocated in favor of greater support, protection and humanitarian aid for the families located in Zolote-4 during UNHCR's **Local Protection Meeting (LPM)** held on 23 January. The families in Zolote-4 have been experiencing regular shelling for the last four years.

In January, UNHCR and its partners conducted **506 protection monitoring visits** to conflict-affected populations in settlements located on the 'contact line'. In December, UNHCR's NGO legal partner, *Right to Protection (R2P)*, conducted **74 protection monitoring visits** at five entry/exit checkpoints (EECP), where they surveyed and counselled **2,099 persons crossing the 'contact line'**. This information can also be found on UNHCR and R2P's [Online Checkpoint Monitoring Dashboard](#). Seventy-two percent of respondents were over the age of 60. The number of checkpoint crossings has been continuously growing over the years. In 2018, people crossed the 'contact line' **13,620 million times**, which is 15 percent more than in 2017. Information on monthly crossings of the 'contact line' can be found on [UNHCR Monthly Crossings Dashboard with information provided by the Ukrainian Border Guards](#).

**Severe winter conditions** continue posing additional protection and health risks for people who **cross the 'contact line'**, in particular, the elderly and people suffering from chronic illnesses. Long queues of persons and private cars waiting overnight continue to be reported, particularly on the non-government controlled area (NGCA) side of Stanytsia Luhanska and Maiorsk. In January, **eight elderly civilians** (aged from 60 to 80) died at these two EECPs from heart attacks as a result of the intense cold. All of them were traveling to government-controlled areas (GCA) to receive their pensions. Snowfall also had other protection impacts on persons of concern in January. With the roads closed off by snow, the number of public transport availability reduced by half with some settlements becoming entirely blocked. UNHCR partner Proliska supported clearing the snow and facilitating humanitarian access in several villages by providing petroleum and brining in tractors to support the authorities. As a result of the snow blocking the roads, people suffering from diabetes in villages near the 'contact line' were not able to receive their insulin on time. As a response, Proliska and UNHCR transported insulin to the homes of **27 vulnerable persons** in one blocked settlement.

In the fifth year of conflict, there is an increasing **need for psychosocial support** in eastern Ukraine for the people residing along the 'contact line'. During the reporting period, UNHCR partner Proliska **organized 253 individual psychosocial consultations** to help conflict affected people deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety and psychological tension. Proliska even witnessed children who have witnessed military aggression suffering from challenges in using speech.

UNHCR continues monitoring and providing support to vulnerable populations living in **isolated settlements**, where there is limited or no access due to current or recent presence of military. One of them is the village of **Novooleksandrivka**, located on the 'contact line'. Because of the absence of state services, fewer than 20 people remain there. Thanks to UNHCR advocacy with authorities, Proliska has been granted access to the village to deliver much needed medicine and food as well as arrange for the supply of petroleum for radiators that generate electricity for the households. UNHCR also successfully advocated for the resumption of pension payments for the residents of Novooleksandrivka. Therefore, Proliska also takes care of receiving and delivering pensions to households with pensioners, as well as helps those with limited mobility around the house. During winter, elderly people who live alone needed additional help with cleaning snow near their households, obtaining drinking water, coal and firewood.



### FIND BELOW THE LINKS TO OUR MOST RECENTLY UPDATED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS:

[UNHCR Partner Maps](#) (interactive): visit this interactive map to know which NGO partners UNHCR is working with.

[UNHCR's Presence in eastern Ukraine and Partners Map](#) (Printable): see this map to know where UNHCR is present and where its partners are working in eastern Ukraine.

UNHCR's Presence in Ukraine and Partners Map (Printable): see this detailed map to learn about UNHCR's coverage in the entirety of Ukraine.



## MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE TO REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS

### Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- In the month of January, UNHCR's partner the *Tenth of April* with leaders of refugee communities, established a Coordination Council on integration issues. The Council also included representatives of Temporary Accommodation Centers and Regional Migration Services. The Council has already been joined by eight refugee-run NGOs that support the idea of collective efforts towards refugee integration and are willing to invest efforts of their communities into this process.
- In January, UNHCR has been supporting asylum-seekers who have been unable to access the Kyiv State Migration Service (SMS) by providing them with "UNHCR Protection Letters". These letters provide confirmation that the asylum-seekers wish to apply for asylum, and therefore is not left without valid civil documentation. During the month, the Kyiv SMS office closed for it to transition and become a new Central Inter-Regional Directorate.

# 1,642

legal consultations were provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in January

# 626

social consultations were provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in January

# 44

refugees and asylum seekers received psychosocial assistance in January

# 3

Peaceful Coexistence Projects completed in January

# 94

Court interventions were undertaken by UNHCR partners in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in January



Two of the three PCPs completed in January were provision necessary equipment, furniture and books to two evening schools serving refugee youth in Bila Tserkva and Vyshneve, Kyiv region. The projects were developed by the Somali community and youth community with the support of UNHCR NGO partner Rokada. Studying together with Ukrainians will help refugee youth smoothly integrate in society.

### Livelihood Interventions for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

# 20

refugees were counselled on opportunities to receive self-reliance grants from UNHCR and its NGO partners in January

# 73

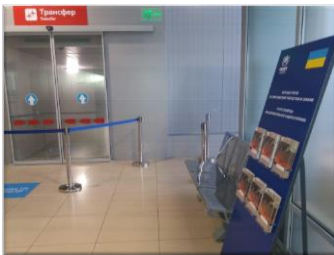
refugees have started their own businesses with UNHCR self-reliance grants since the launch of the program in 2018



Nataliia\*, originally from the Russian Federation, found a home in Ukraine, where she became a member of an eco-village in Yushki, 40 kilometres from Kyiv. With the support of community, Nataliia initiated an apiary and a bee therapy house. With the support of the community, Nataliia learned apiculture and with the self-reliance grants provided by UNHCR, she was able to start her own apiary and produce her own honey.

## Assistance to Stateless Persons and Persons at Risk of Statelessness

In 2018, in the framework of worldwide “IBelong” campaign to end statelessness by 2024, UNHCR printed and distributed 1,588 copies of the [UNHCR/OSCE Handbook on statelessness in the OSCE Area](#) in Russian to regional departments of State Migration Services, Civil Registry of the Ministry of Justice and Free Legal Aid Centers. The Civil Registry Office of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine shares with UNHCR reports from its territorial bodies on issuing birth certificates to ethnic Roma to prevent statelessness.



In January UNHCR finalized production and delivery of **30 signs** and **24 stands** with information leaflets **on asylum procedures in Ukraine** in [Arabic](#), [English](#), [Farsi](#) and [Russian](#). The signs with **9,160 information leaflets** have been placed at 30 border checkpoints with Russian Federation and Belarus. The stands have been placed in **24 international airports** across Ukraine providing information that will facilitate the access to asylum procedures for those seeking international protection.

# 281

stateless persons (or at risk of) were identified and provided with legal aid in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in January

# 13

persons received passports in January thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

# 13

persons received duplicates of birth certificates in January thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

# 5

persons obtained their birth certificates for the first time in January thanks to UNHCR and partners' support



*Radda\*, who is a Roma girl, was born in Ukraine in 1992 when her birth certificate was incorrectly registered as being born to unknown parents. Nevertheless, Radda had been living with her mother until her mother's death when Radda was 14. To complicate matters, Radda encountered difficulties being recognized as an orphan despite studying in an orphanage. Therefore, Radda was unable to apply to receive a national passport as she could not prove that she was a citizen of Ukraine. Thanks to*

*UNHCR partner the Tenth of April, who worked closely with Berezhivskiy regional department of State Migration Service, Radda was finally able to receive her passport and produce birth certificates to her two children.*



## PROTECTION TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND OTHER CONFLICT AFFECTED PERSONS

### Protection Cluster

During the reporting period, the Protection and Shelter/NFI Clusters finalised the collection and consolidation of information on contingency measures adopted by the Clusters' partners, following the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) decision to update the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan. The revision of the Contingency Plan takes into account key policy and legal developments of 2018, including the law *On Peculiarities of the State Policy on Ensuring the Sovereignty of Ukraine in the Temporarily Occupied Territories*, the introduction of the Joint Forces Operation as well as the imposition of Martial Law in eastern Ukraine. Based on previous trends of population displacements, the contingency plan foresees either

gradual or sudden escalation of violence, which could result in an additional 682,000 to 930,000 people fleeing either towards government-controlled area (GCA) or non-government controlled area (NGCA). Protection and Shelter/NFI Cluster partners provided information on their respective capacities to scale up their protection, shelter and NFI responses.

## Legal Assistance and Protection Counselling

# 2,706

internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in January

# 6,050

persons benefiting from individual protection counselling in January

# 35

Group consultations on protection-related issues were provided to people along the 'contact line' in January

## Social Accompaniment



*Iryna\*, 25, lives in the village of Avdiivka near the 'contact line' where her house has been partially destroyed by the shelling. Iryna is a single mother and she was not able to apply for her national ID at the age of 16. With the break out of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, applying for a passport became even more complicated. Without a passport she could neither find a job nor send her child to a kindergarten. Thanks to UNHCR partner Proliska, Iryna was finally able to visit the local offices of the State Migration Service and apply for her documents. Now, Iryna can finally exercise her rights as a lawful citizen of Ukraine.*

## SGBV

- In January, UNHCR partners in eastern Ukraine provided social consultations to **six SGBV survivors**.
- In January, **28 persons** benefited from awareness raising trainings on SGBV prevention.

## Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)



# 15

IPA cash beneficiaries selected in January 2019

UNHCR continues identifying and providing vulnerable conflict-affected individuals in eastern Ukraine with IPA in the form of cash. **2,500 vulnerable persons** living near the 'contact line' will receive cash assistance for individual protection needs from UNHCR in 2019.

**1,000 conflict-affected persons** will receive IPA-in-kind assistance from UNHCR in 2019. This support primarily includes special equipment for people with disabilities.



*Oleksandr\*, 86, lives with his wife in the village of Stanytsia Luhanska located on the 'contact line'. Having worked in a blacksmith workshop all his life, the elderly man lost his hearing. As the elderly couple and their children have been encountering difficulties accessing livelihoods because of the conflict, they have not been able to afford a deaf-aid for Oleksandr. Thanks to UNHCR IPA cash the man bought a deaf aid and now can communicate without obstacles.*

## Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCP)



**65**  
**Projects in**  
**2018-2019**

Since the beginning of 2018, UNHCR has initiated the construction to **65 peaceful coexistence projects (PCPs)** in eastern Ukraine. The majority of these projects are currently in progress in Luhansk and Donetsk regions, on both sides of the 'contact line.' In January 2019, **four PCPs were completed.**



*One of the PCPs completed in January has been equipping a Social Center in the town of Svitlodarsk, located on the 'contact line'. The Center provides free services to elderly people, persons with specific needs and disabilities as well as other conflict-affected populations. Now the elderly there can benefit from medical services and medical check-ups, a gym and gymnastic sessions, workshops and social events. UNHCR provided the Center with furniture, plumbing, an office, a kitchen as well as sport and medical equipment. Some 1,569 vulnerable persons will have unhindered access to free social, medical and educational services, therefore they will enjoy a stronger protection from the state.*

## Community Support Initiatives (CSI)



**87**  
**Projects**  
**in 2018-2019**

UNHCR has been focusing on empowering communities of refugees and internally displaced and other conflict affected persons in eastern Ukraine. CSIs includes a range of activities designed to mobilize and empower communities, building on the education, skills, and capacities of affected populations in order to strengthen their abilities to organize emergency response, protect themselves and identify solutions.

## Winterization



*Maria\*, 46, and her parents were forced to move to her summer house in the countryside ('dacha') in 2014 when their town Luhanske came under heavy shelling. The family has been living on humanitarian aid and their vegetable garden since then. Nevertheless, her home continues to be impacted by frequent shelling. This worries Maria as her village is so remote, that no ambulance can access them rapidly if something should happen to her ageing parents. Maria's house has been damaged a number of times by shelling and the family has had to invest most of their savings on repairing windows and parts of their roof. As their financial savings ran out, the family did not have any resources to afford solid fuel. Thanks to UNHCR winterization cash program, Maria*

*bought a stock of solid fuel to live through the cold season.*

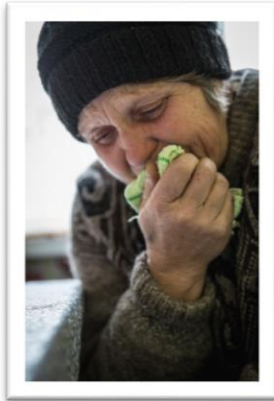
**Housing:** On 29 January, UNHCR held a presentation of its survey that evaluated IDP participation in the Affordable Housing Program (50/50) offered by the Government of Ukraine in 2017. This is a subsidised housing purchase program, where 50% of the apartment costs are covered by the IDP/veteran household and 50% by the state budget. Presenting the results of the survey conducted in 2018 to 30 representatives of the Government of Ukraine, MPs, embassies, other UN agencies and NGO partners, UNHCR highlighted the main recommendations. UNHCR also had a number of recommendations. One recommendation was to increase the state budget and to narrow down targeted IDP population to address housing needs of the most vulnerable persons. Furthermore, the management of the waiting list should be regulated and unified on all state levels.



## SHELTER/NON-FOOD ITEMS AND HOUSING

### Shelter and NFI Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

- During the month of January, UNHCR completed repairs of **24 households** of vulnerable families in eastern Ukraine.



Svitlana\*, 59, lives in the village of Zolotarivka, one of the first hotspots when the conflict broke out. The house, where Svitlana lived with her husband, was shelled and damaged for the first time in July 2014. The couple had to live in a bomb shelter for some time, until their house was completely destroyed one day under heavy shelling later that month. On seeing his house burning, Svitlana's husband was unable to run. Once he was taken to the hospital, he was diagnosed with cancer. As he left the hospital, the couple moved to their son's house. However, soon after her husband died and Svitlana had to move out of her son's house as he was already accommodating other extended family members. Thanks to the support of UNHCR's partner, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Svitlana's house was repaired and furnished.



## Working in Partnership

The humanitarian response to displacement in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by the Government, international organizations, national and international NGOs. In providing support to persons of concern, UNHCR works closely with the Government of Ukraine. In the case of IDPs, UNHCR has signed a Letter of Understanding with the [Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons](#). UNHCR works together with [11 NGO partners](#). UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster. UNHCR also leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical financial support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and un-earmarked funds.

The indicative level of funding for the operation is [US \\$0.4 million](#). This figure is based on contributions earmarked to Ukraine, the indicative allocation of flexible funds, and adjustments.

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE | USD

Russian Federation 0.25 million | Lithuania 0.034 million

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

**Sweden** 90.4 million | **Denmark** 54.9 million | **Norway** 44.5 million | **Netherlands** 37.5 million | **United Kingdom** 31.7 million | **Germany** 27.3 million | **Switzerland** 15.1 million

## CONTACTS

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## LINKS

UNHCR Ukraine: [www.unhcr.org/ua](http://www.unhcr.org/ua) - Twitter: [www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine](https://twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv) - Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/unhcr\\_ukraine](https://www.flickr.com/photos/unhcr_ukraine)

Please note that this report attempts to highlight the main activities implemented by UNHCR and its NGO partners within the selected reporting period. Therefore, please note that it is by no means exhaustive. For additional details on our work, do not hesitate to check [www.unhcr.org/ua](http://www.unhcr.org/ua) or, to contact us directly [ukrkom@unhcr.org](mailto:ukrkom@unhcr.org)

\*Please note that the names of the persons that appear in this report have been changed for protection reasons.