

UKRAINE SITUATION

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

7-22 October 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** The ceasefire implemented on 1 September continues to hold, while humanitarian access to the non-government controlled area remains greatly restricted.
- **Protection concerns:** The Government is facing challenges to accurately register internally displaced people (IDPs). Accurate registration is essential to provide IDPs with social assistance and other forms of aid. UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Social Policy to improve registration data accuracy.
- **Legislation update:** The Temporary Order on Movement was revised, improving procedures for the movement of humanitarian assistance.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 6 October, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 2,400 people in government controlled areas. In non-government controlled areas, UNHCR provided NFIs to a further 300 people.



Ivan and Zulia are among the families that received shelter materials from UNHCR in the village of Granitnoe near Mariupol. "Our house was shelled four times. Our neighbor was killed," says 57-year-old Ivan. Photo: UNHCR/N. Sorokopud/Mariupol/October 2015

WINTERIZATION PLAN

57,300

beneficiaries

USD 6.1 million

total budget

116,000

NFIs

34,000

tonnes or m³ of heating coal or wood

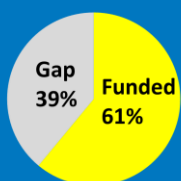
USD 1.75 million

winterization cash assistance

FUNDING

USD 41.5 million

requested for the operation in 2015



PRIORITIES

- As part of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan, to lead protection, shelter and NFI clusters to help those forcibly displaced from their homes.
- Support Government in efforts to establish a central authority to deal with IDPs.
- Work with the Government to improve registration system, specifically procedures relating to pensioners and access to social assistance.
- Promote freedom of movement and humanitarian access.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The security situation in eastern Ukraine has improved following the implementation of a ceasefire on 1 September and the finalization of the Addendum to the Minsk package of Measures on the withdrawal of tanks, artillery under 100mm and mortars up to 120mm on 29 September. Nonetheless, the overall situation remains tense; the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission continues to [report](#) small arms fire on the line of contact.

The humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine is precarious as humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR, continue to face significant restrictions on access to the non-government controlled area. UNHCR activities in non-government controlled Luhansk region are expected to resume following the rescinding of the order by de facto authorities expelling UN agencies. However, international NGOs, including UNHCR partners remain banned. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk region, UNHCR has been forced to scale back the distribution of humanitarian assistance as no supply trucks have been able to reach the area since the end of August due to restrictions put in place by de facto authorities. Similarly, the activities of UNHCR partners are restricted or suspended due to a 'registration' process required by de facto authorities. UNHCR hopes to resume distribution of humanitarian assistance to the non-government controlled areas as soon as possible in preparation for winter.

With lowering temperatures, the need for distribution of humanitarian assistance will increase. People in the non-government controlled area face shortages of basic essential items and there remain extensive shelter repair needs. Their predicament is made worse by the lack of livelihood opportunities. In areas receiving displaced people, most IDPs stay in private accommodation, with host families or volunteers. Some 14,375 stay in 300 collective centres intended as short-term transit accommodation. These tend to be the most vulnerable with limited financial means and who are unable to afford private accommodation, with some unable to cover the cost of utility bills. Livelihood opportunities for IDPs are very restricted due to the difficult economic situation and discrimination from employers. To address some of these needs, UNHCR is currently finalizing its winterization plan. The plan will be launched on 1 November and will provide winterization assistance to some 57,321 people through the provision of non-food items and heating coal in areas near the line of contact and cash assistance to IDPs in the government controlled area.

The improved security situation has led to increased population movement, though freedom of movement across the line of contact between the non-government and government controlled area remains restricted due to security measures and the continued blockade of the non-government controlled area by the Government. While freedom of movement across the line of contact became easier following the launch of an electronic system in July, control measures in place mean that people must queue for several hours to cross the line of contact. Presently there are few amenities in place for those waiting to cross the line of contact. This will become a greater concern as weather worsens and temperatures drop with the coming of winter.

UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Social Policy to address the accuracy of IDP registration data. It has been assessed that previously reported statistics contain inaccuracies which need to be addressed in order to provide an accurate understanding of humanitarian needs.

External Displacement

UNHCR continues to monitor the refugee situation in neighbouring countries. According to government sources in receiving countries, the total number of people seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries now stands at 1,111,300, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (858,400) and Belarus (127,170).

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that the situation remains calm. While total cross-border traffic slightly decreased at both checkpoints during the reporting period, there was a net flow of 258 people entering Ukraine. This continues to reflect the trend of the past few weeks of more people returning to Ukraine.

As of 22 October, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries in the European Union and in neighbouring countries there were 5,613 applications for international protection in Germany, 4,104 in Poland, 4,546 in Italy, 2,221 in Sweden, 2,211 in France, 250 in Moldova, 70 in Romania, 60 in Hungary and 30 in Slovakia according to government sources in receiving countries.

Data source: Respective national asylum authorities

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster co-led by UNHCR and OHCHR remains concerned about freedom of movement following publication of the updated Temporary Order on Movement on 28 September 2015. Movement of civilians was not significantly amended. However, there are protection concerns regarding the recently established humanitarian logistic centers near the line of contact. The centers are located between the checkpoints of the government and non-government controlled area, in the area with the highest risk from mines, UXO and hostilities. Despite the need for more corridors for the civilian population to avoid the long queues and to reduce travel time, particularly in Luhansk region, the only update made in this regard was to reduce the number of official transport corridors from six to five.
- A number of provisions of resolution no. 636 harmonizing the Council of Ministers Resolution nos. 505, 509, 535, 637 and 595 with requirements of the ‘Law on ensuring of rights and freedoms of internally displaced people’, dated 20 October 2014 may facilitate IDP’s access to services. However, part of the resolution intends to address the issue of registering unaccompanied children, though some issues remain: 1) availability of notarial power of attorney from both of the parents; 2) according to Child Services, unaccompanied children can be registered as IDPs, however, within one year Child Services can initiate proceedings to deprive parental rights if they do not appear to assume their parental obligations.
- The Cluster has developed a guidance document on thematic note on people with disabilities on how to address protection and vulnerability. Recommendations and a checklist for organizations and authorities were developed; these highlight aspects to consider when developing programs to ensure a protection focused humanitarian response throughout Ukraine.
- More information can be found in the September [factsheet](#).

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 28 September, an amended version of the “Temporary Order on Control of the Movement of People, Transport Vehicles and Cargo across the Line of Contact in Donetsk and Luhansk Regions” was adopted. Changes include: humanitarian cargo can now be transported by railway; the creation of a priority-based fast track and simplified procedure for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the non-government controlled area for international humanitarian organizations designated by the Ministry of Social Policy; the creation of special sites for the inspection of humanitarian cargo; the establishment of a CIMIC (civil-military coordination) centre; and the regulation of access to logistics centres. Some amendments were the result of negotiations involving humanitarian organizations and the Logistics Cluster.
- Despite the advocacy of the humanitarian community and civil society, Parliament has not considered either of the alternative drafts amending the Law on Local Elections, enabling IDPs to vote. Given that the next two are non-plenary, the electoral legislation will not be amended before nationwide local elections scheduled for 25 October. IDPs who have not established permanent residence at places of displacement will not be able to vote at the upcoming elections of local self-governing authorities. UNHCR will continue its advocacy efforts towards aligning the national legislation with the Guiding Principles, particularly regarding non-discriminatory access to participation in government and public affairs.
- On 7 October, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the concept for the National Social Programme on Countering Human Trafficking until 2020. Within one month the Ministry of Social Policy will develop the programme based on the adopted concept paper. The step is conditioned by the European Union’s recent Visa Liberalization Action Plans (VLAP) Progress Evaluation Report on Ukraine, in which Ukraine is advised to revise its counter-trafficking agenda in the light of current crisis situation. The concept specifically refers to newly emerging trafficking risks associated with the ongoing conflict in East Ukraine, internal displacement and the return of de-mobilized military staff. The initiative is welcomed by UNHCR, as prospectively it should contribute to the national protection framework for IDPs, specifically in terms of strengthened referral pathways, access to remedies and assistance and rehabilitation

¹ [International Protection Considerations Related to the Developments in Ukraine – Update III](http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html)
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html>

schemes for the victims as well as awareness raising campaigns. It should be recalled, in its recently released International Protection Considerations Paper on Developments in Ukraine, UNHCR stresses the increased vulnerability of IDPs to potential exploitation due to economic hardship and weak ties with host communities.

- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner Stantia Kharkiv provided 4,524 general consultations, 1,224 legal consultations and 473 psychosocial consultations. More than 80 per cent of the consultations were provided to female beneficiaries. Main concerns were access to humanitarian assistance, initial registration, social counseling, IDP rights, registration for social assistance, property, crossing the line of contact, children, social adaptation, anxiety and depression. UNHCR partner Crimea SOS provided consultations to 1,957 people, of which 1,426 were social consultations and 531 were legal consultations. The most frequently raised concerns included the crossing of the line of contact, civil documentation, blocked bank accounts, IDP registration, court decisions in the non-government controlled area, disposal of property in the non-government controlled area, winterization assistance, medical assistance and housing.

Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR, continues its involvement in preparation of the Humanitarian Needs Overview for 2016. The Shelter Cluster in consultation with partners has already developed a comprehensive overview of different affected population groups, geographical areas and particular humanitarian needs. This exercise will be completed once the population baseline is agreed at the inter-cluster level.
- Coordination for winterization is currently ongoing with a particular focus on areas close to the line of contact. The sub-national Cluster has developed a tool to consolidate the plans of all humanitarian partners to avoid overlapping and duplication of assistance, allowing community by community coordination.
- Numerous partners are providing shelter repairs, NFI distributions and cash support along the line of contact and throughout five regions of eastern Ukraine, while the level of assistance in other regions is scarce and is not sufficiently attracting the attention of donors and humanitarian actors. This imbalance in the medium and long-term perspective may lead IDPs to undertake further movements, seriously undermining their resilience and their coping capacity.
- While a few humanitarian organizations are now able to operate in the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, Shelter and NFI needs are still acute and winterization remains a serious concern.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR NFI and shelter materials were provided to over 2,700 people. In the government controlled area, UNHCR operational partners distributed bedding sets (consisting of a blanket, bed linen and towels) and other NFIs to some 840 people in the Mariupol area. UNHCR provided shelter materials to the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) for distribution to 420 households in the Mariupol area. The UNHCR Field Office in Sievierodonetsk provided 30,000 bricks and 10,000 m² of glass to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for shelter repairs in villages near the line of contact. UNHCR implementing partner ADRA carried out repairs to 208 houses in northern Donetsk. Implementing partner People in Need (PiN) completed medium repairs on 41 homes and provided emergency shelter materials to six homes in northern Donetsk.
- In the non-government controlled area, UNHCR provided blankets and kitchen sets for distribution by Luhansk Red Cross to 300 children at Severoserbsk orphanage. UNHCR and PiN conducted a monitoring mission to Horlivka, northern Donetsk, to verify the use and distribution of shelter material. It was assessed that 70 per cent of shelter material delivered to Horlivka has been distributed, while it will take three to four weeks to distribute the remaining materials. De facto authority restrictions on humanitarian operations in the area continue to restrict delivery of assistance.

Preparing for winter

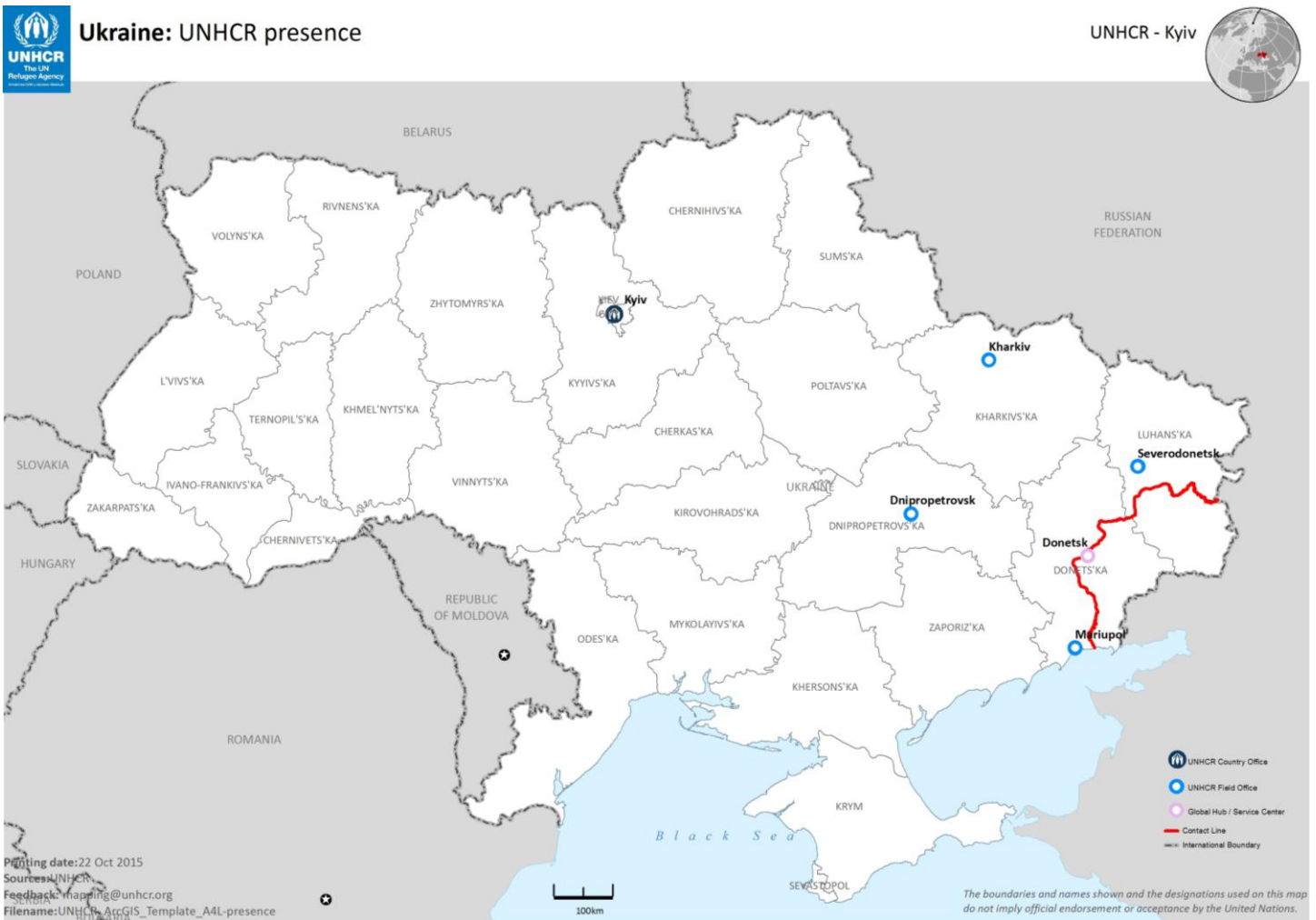
Villages close to the line of contact are in need of urgent support ahead of winter. “We need everything – from warm clothes to new furniture. Any assistance with coal and heating will help us during the cold season,” explains 43-year-old Liudmyla, from the village of Andriivka in Donetsk region.

Since her house was damaged by shelling in mid-August, Liudmyla received roofing sheets, glass, timber and bricks as part of UNHCR shelter assistance delivered by the Danish Refugee Council. “My neighbors left the village as they could not restore electricity and they could not stay any longer here with their children,” adds Liudmyla.



Liudmyla is worried about the upcoming winter. She wants to finish all repairs before the first snow, though she can only rely on the support of friends and relatives. Her family was running a small grocery kiosk that was destroyed by the shelling. She has no money to purchase coal for the winter season and cannot arrange for a delivery truck to come to the village due to restrictions on freedom of movement and numerous checkpoints in the area.

Photo: UNHCR/N. Sorokopud/Donetsk region/October 2015



Working in partnership

The humanitarian response to the internal displacement situation in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by international organizations, the Government, local and international NGOs. UNHCR works with six implementing partners and other partners providing assistance to internally displaced people through protection and legal assistance, policy development and capacity building and the distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items. UNHCR co-leads the Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster and co-leads the Protection Cluster.

UNHCR implementing partners (IDP operation): [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Stantia Kharkiv](#)

Key Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster partners: [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Caritas Ukraine](#) | [Chesna i Svyata Kraina](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Donbas reconstruction and development agency](#) | [Dopomoga Dnipra](#) | [HIA Hungary](#) | [IOM](#) | [Mercy Corps](#) | [Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Communal Living](#) | [Ministry of Social Policy](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Save the Children UK](#) | [Save Ukraine Organization](#) | [State Emergency Service](#) | [Ukrainian Red Cross Society](#) | [UNDP](#) | [Vostok SOS](#) | [World Jewish Relief](#)

Key Protection Cluster partners: [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Crimean Diaspora](#) | [HelpAge](#) | [IOM](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [OHCHR \(HRMMU\)](#) | [OSCE](#) | [People in Need](#) | [The Right to Protection](#) | [Save the Children](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

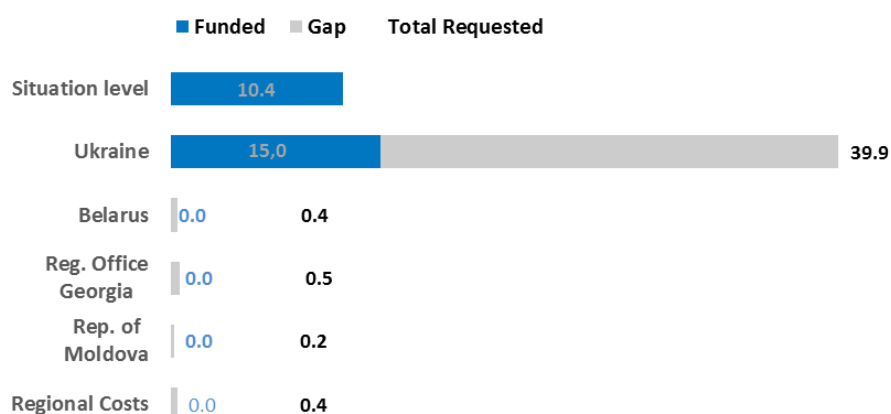
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have already indicated a contribution to UNHCR's 2015 activities in Ukraine with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR's total financial requirement in 2015 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 41.5 million**, as presented in the [Supplementary Appeal](#). This covers UNHCR's financial needs for providing protection and assistance to those displaced by the conflict inside Ukraine, as well as those externally displaced in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova as well as in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, countries covered by the Regional Office in Georgia. Contributions recorded so far represented **61 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed: Funding (in million USD)

- Canada
- Denmark
- Estonia
- European Union
- Finland
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Japan
- Norway
- Portugal
- Private Donors
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

A total of **25.5 million** has been contributed



Contacts:

Nina Sorokopud, Public Information Officer, sorokopu@unhcr.org, Tel: +38 044 288-9710 ext.116

Links: UNHCR Ukraine: <http://unhcr.org.ua/en>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv

Twitter: www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine
UNHCR Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/unhcr_ukraine