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Ukraine: Humanitarian Impact
Situation Report
As of 5:00 p.m. (EET) on 2 March

This report is produced by OCHA Ukraine in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 5 p.m. (EET) 1 March to 5 p.m. (EET) 2 March. The next report will be produced on 3 March.

HIGHLIGHTS

• Fighting, airstrikes, artillery shelling and overall violence across several parts of the country have killed 227 civilians, including 15 children. A further 525 civilians, including 28 children have been injured, according to Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) report which covers the 24 February to 1 March period.

• Damage and destruction to civilian infrastructure in areas of active fighting and those affected by airstrikes and shelling continue to impede people’s access to water, food, healthcare and other basic services. This is also impacting the ability of partners to scale-up and expand programmes inside Ukraine.

• More than 870,000 people have crossed Ukraine’s borders since 24 February, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Most of the people fleeing Ukraine are women, girls and boys. Tracking the number of internally displaced people is challenging due to the fluidity of the situation. Ukraine’s main railroad company facilitating evacuations noted that by 28 February, more than 500,000 people had been evacuated, mostly from eastern and central parts of the country towards western oblasts.

• The humanitarian needs of people affected, those on the move and internally displaced are critical. The Health Cluster stressed that trauma care and primary care, essential medicine and medical supplies are urgently needed. People also need access to food as well as support with non-food items, such as household necessities. The key protection concern is to facilitate safe and dignified evacuation of vulnerable people, including people with disabilities, older persons, women and children.
SITUATION OVERVIEW

At least 202 civilians have been killed or injured across conflict-affected areas in Ukraine between this and the previous reporting period, when 550 civilian casualties were recorded by OHCHR. The number of civilians killed or injured since the military offensive on 24 February has now reached 752 in total (525 injured and 227 killed), with eastern Ukraine’s Donetska and Luhanska oblasts accounting for the highest number of cases, followed by central, southern and northern parts of the country. Of the total killed, 31 are men, 25 are women, 15 are children; the sex of remaining 156 is yet unknown. OHCHR maintains that real figures are considerably higher, as there is a delay in receiving information from some locations where there are active hostilities, and many reports are still pending corroboration.

Reports of damage to civilian infrastructure, especially residential buildings, have continued, especially in densely populated cities of Donetsk, Chernihiv, Horlivka, Kharkiv, in and around Kyiv, Mariupol, Sievierodonetsk and Zhytomyr. Active shelling and airstrikes have also continued in other locations on both sides of the “contact line” in eastern Ukraine as well as in smaller settlements in northern, central and southern parts of the country. Reports of disruptions to electricity lines as well as gas and water supply systems are alarming, especially as Ukraine temperatures are still largely below zero. Hospitals and schools are also reportedly coming under constant fire, including in areas on both sides of the “contact line” in eastern Ukraine, where the conflict remains most active.

The number of people fleeing the country is rapidly rising. Close to 200,000 people have crossed the border between this and the previous reporting period, according to UNHCR. This number is almost double the daily average before 1 March. Between 24 February and 1 March, UNHCR recorded 874,000 Ukrainian refugees, with Poland, Hungary and Moldova the top three destination countries. The number of internally displaced people has not yet been fully identified, although initial estimates by UNHCR stated that over 100,000 IDPs by 28 February. The actual number is considered to be much higher. Earlier on 28 February, the Ukrainian railway company noted that more than half a million people had been evacuated towards western parts of the country, and local reports indicate that not all of the people moving internally are planning to cross international borders.

Programme disruptions coupled with conflict conditions continue to increase the affected population’s vulnerability to communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, polio and measles. Poor vaccination coverage increases the risk of outbreaks of preventable communicable diseases, particularly among children. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the recent reported cases of polio in the western part of the country highlight this risk. In addition, confinement conditions in shelters, population displacement, and infrastructure damage, make hygiene difficult to maintain, increasing the risk of respiratory and diarrheal diseases, which could rapidly have a large impact.

NEEDS, RESPONSE AND GAPS

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

- The Health Cluster reports that in clinics in affected areas, oxygen needs are critical, especially for hospitalized patients. Needs have also been identified in trauma care and primary care. There have also been requests for support in provision of life-saving and essential medicines (insulin, tetanus antitoxin) as well as trauma and surgical supplies (dressing, surgical instruments). Clinics also urgently need generators and fuel.

- The Protection Cluster states that the most pressing need is to facilitate local efforts to evacuate people living in affected areas, particularly older people and people with disabilities or limited mobility. There is also an urgent need to scale-up reception capacities in places of arrivals of internally displaced people, including the possibility of provision of essential protection services, such as psycho-social support and individual counselling. Gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) protocols are needed to be integrated in all life-saving services to support prevention and mitigate risk of abuse.

1 Information is based on public sources and local reports. Humanitarian partners cannot, at this moment verify these reports due to security and access-related challenges.
• The pre-existing mental health and psychosocial support needs of the population have intensified. Health care workers face overloading, understaffing and are at increased risk of psychological distress and mental health disorders as a result of witnessing traumatic events.

• Outreach to the population with information regarding procedures for evacuations, safe pathways and roads to locations westward, as well as on the availability of shelters, functioning state social services and humanitarian assistance is another main need of the affected population.

• Food, water, shelter and basic household necessities are also urgently needed, especially for those who remain trapped in cities with active hostilities.

RESPONSE

• Hotlines have been established across major population concentration points to provide people with essential information on available services, with an average of 300 calls per day. A protection monitoring tool has been launched to get a better understanding of people’s concerns, needs and vulnerabilities to inform humanitarian response.

• The UN and INGOs are also supporting their local partners, including through topping up their funds, to provide food and other basic household items. The local partners have also established over 30 temporary soup kitchens, mainly in bordering areas with high concentration of people.

• The Red Cross is on the frontline providing support to people who are wounded and facilitating evacuations. The Red Cross also reached around 8,000 people in shelters in subway stations with food and NFIs. Local NGOs in eastern Ukraine have also provided food and non-food items, including shelter materials to more than 300 households in the last three days. In L'viv oblast, an international NGO has today delivered five trucks of food, hygiene items and sleeping bags.

• The UN and its partners are also scaling up support to mobile teams to provide psychosocial support to children and undertaking other child protection activities. Efforts across other clusters and sectors include urgent scale-up of assessment of needs and planning of activities.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

• Protection by presence and direct provision of services and assistance is limited due to the security situation, which hinders ability to access the affected populations. Staff from humanitarian organizations are affected alike, and some are still in the process of relocating to safe havens where they can operate and adapt their programmes to the new emerging needs.

• Access to fuel is reportedly scarce, particularly in eastern parts of the country, which delays delivery of assistance and limits existing capacities to access and/or evacuate people at heightened risk. Power outages and unstable telecommunications in certain locations are also limiting people’s access to hotlines and information. Bank systems are no longer operational in certain locations, which also limits partner capacity to provide cash-based interventions.

• Access to health services, essential medicines, and market goods is limited by security concerns and movement restrictions related to the hostilities and the imposed martial law and curfews. Based on the shifting context, many health facilities have found themselves along conflict lines or in changed areas of control.

• Damage to health care infrastructure, curtailed access to referral hospitals and pharmacies, and personnel fleeing from conflict-affected areas are affecting the health system. In addition, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), surgical departments and intensive care units (ICUs) are becoming overwhelmed with trauma patients.