

HIGHLIGHTS

- Evolving security environment increases needs
- Water supply interruptions become a new normal
- Winter looms, as key clusters advance in winterization plans
- Protection concerns are widespread, impacting the most vulnerable
- Underfunding may further degrade situation of millions of people depending on aid



In this issue

- Increase in needs across all sectors P. 1
- Civilian casualties continue taking toll P. 2
- Looming cold and winterization plans P. 3
- Underfunding is a critical concern P. 5

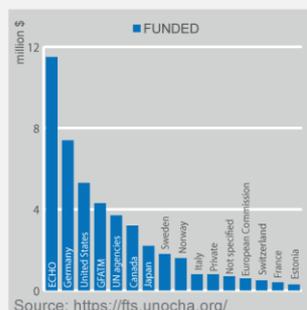
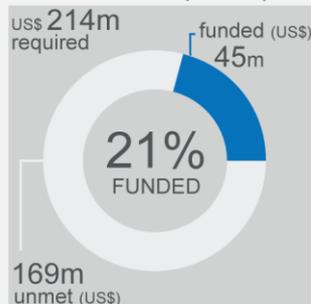
Fighting lingers despite renewed ceasefire

The 21 June ceasefire agreements to allow safe harvesting may have lowered the overall intensity of fighting. However, sporadic clashes are taking place in all areas of critical concern. The areas witnessing clashes have remained relatively unchanged. For local population living along the 'contact line', where fighting is most intense, damage and insecurity become inescapable part of their daily lives. Their lives trapped in the midst of such clashes hang in the balance, while continuous acute needs across critical sectors rise. Against this background, ongoing insecurity also represents a serious challenge for humanitarian and development partners to transcend towards recovery and resilience building.

Of concern is damage continuously reported to or near the critical power and water supply systems, often resulting in disruption of supply to millions. Since the beginning of 2017, the Donetsk Filter Station (DFS), which supplies water to more than 345,000 people on both sides of the 'contact line' stopped functioning 13 times. The time taken for repair teams to restore supply often lasts more than 24 hours or sometimes a week, hampering people's access to safe water. Other infrastructure, such as the pumping stations, water treatment plants and power lines continue to be affected. According to the WASH Cluster, in July alone, water supply systems have stopped functioning on 11 occasions, limiting access to water for millions on both sides of the 'contact line'. The simmering hot season, coupled with continuous trend of water disruptions and shortages increases not only WASH needs, but also the risks of potential deterioration of public health conditions. On 19 July, during the regular Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) meeting in Minsk, parties to the conflict have expressed willingness to establish so-called safety zones around key water infrastructure, including the DFS. While this is a welcome initiative, concerns as to the full adherence to these arrangements persist, as at least two incidents of shelling were recorded later, impacting DFS and the 1st lift Pumping Station (PS) of the South Donbas Water Pipeline, on 22 and 28 July respectively.

Donetsk Filter Station (DFS):
Serves more than
345,000 
interrupted **13 times** in 2017

FUNDING (2017)



Increase in needs undermine coping capacities of people affected

The preliminary findings of the Food Security Assessment (FSA) conducted by the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster (FSLC) as of June 2017 indicate that as many as 26 per cent (increase from 13 per cent) or 800,000 people in non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) could be severely and moderately food insecure, while some 5 per cent (increase from 1.7 per cent) or 150,000 people are estimated to be severely food insecure. The highest levels of food insecurity is recorded in Donetsk province (NGCA). Meanwhile, initial analysis of FSA data also suggests a deterioration of food insecurity levels in Government controlled areas (GCA), increasing from 7 to 15 per cent in Donetsk and Luhansk provinces.

 **648,000**
students and teachers suffer from
widespread and cumulative impact
of the conflict

 **9,300** households
require extra
winterization assistance

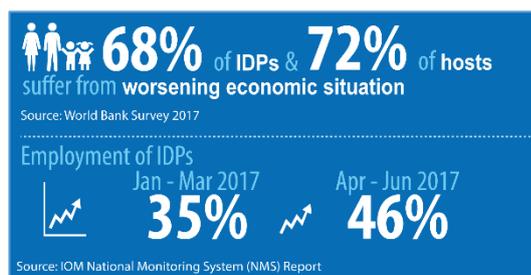
 **11,200** households
require
essential utility repair and assistance

*Indiscriminate
shelling damage
harvest – the only
source of income for
thousands*

Needs have risen in other critical sectors as well. The Education Cluster partners reported that some 648,000 students and teachers in more than 3,400 educational facilities suffer from widespread and cumulative impact of the conflict. According to the Shelter/NFI Cluster, due to strained coping mechanisms in GCA, the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) involuntarily returning to areas along the 'contact line' has increased, and an estimated 9,326 households could require extra assistance to afford basic winterization items. Critical life-saving needs remain in NGCA, as many communities lack access to gas supply, which initially powered them through the winter. Furthermore, the cluster reported that the intensification of shelling in May and June has resulted in damage to some 200 utility repair and assistance with network connection.

Struggle of IDPs remains, despite slight positive socio-economic trend

The impact that the conflict has on the lives of the most vulnerable, such as the IDPs, people with disabilities, children, women, elderly and many more continues to increase. Deteriorating economic environment, coupled with lack of employment opportunities has led to poverty (people living below actual minimum subsistence level) among the conflict-affected people, further heightening their vulnerability. The 2017 World Bank Survey conducted from late 2016 to early 2017 indicates that 68 per cent of IDPs surveyed stated worsening of their economic situation since displacement due to limited employment and livelihoods opportunities. Prolonged displacement is also impacting the economic conditions of the host communities. The survey further suggests that 75 per cent of hosts surveyed indicated worsening of their economic situation in the last 12 months. However, the recent IOM National Monitoring System (NMS) Report indicates a slight increase in the employment of IDPs compared to the previous reporting period, from 35 per cent in January - March to 46 per cent in April - June 2017. The NMS also indicates that some 68 per cent of surveyed IDPs felt totally integrated into the local communities - an increase by 12 per cent compared to the previous round of monitoring. Discrimination of IDPs continues to be witnessed, albeit with slight decrease. The NMS suggests that some 10 per cent of respondents experienced discrimination based on their IDP status.



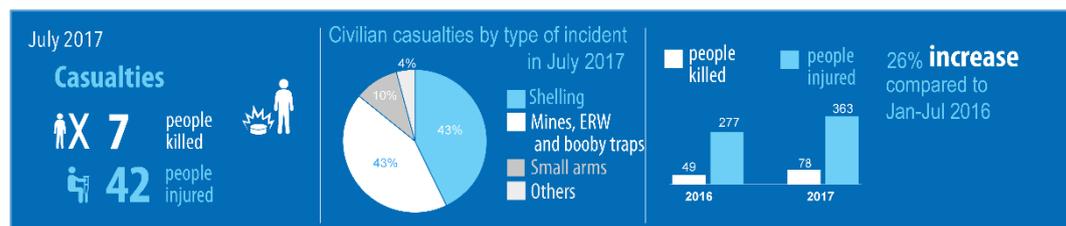
At the same time, IDPs' access to social benefits remains a concern. On 12 July, a draft Law enabling IDPs and conflict-affected people to receive pensions without limitations was registered in the Parliament. According to the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) analysis, the draft Law is expected to remove obstacles for the payment of pension to NGCA residents. According to the Protection Cluster partners, between January 2016 and April 2017, the number of persons from NGCA receiving pension has dropped dramatically, by more than 560,000 people due to the ongoing cumbersome IDP verification process. By April 2017, only 391,000 persons from NGCA received pensions, representing only 30 per cent of pensioners who were residing in the NGCA in August 2014. While the draft Law must go through a lengthy adoption process, the registration of the Law with the Parliament is a positive result of the collective advocacy efforts of the humanitarian and human rights actors.

Impact of the conflict on civilians increases

Farming becomes more challenging as lives of thousands are at stake

Farming is one of the few income-generating activities for many households living on both sides of the 'contact line'. However, hostilities in proximity of farm lands are damaging the harvest. On 20 July, hostilities resulting in fire damaged some 60 hectares of wheat near the village of Novhorodske close to the 'contact line' (Donetsk, GCA). This is followed by a similar incident that took place on 13 July, when more than 46 hectares of farm land was destroyed. In addition to active combat activities, mines, unexploded ordnances (UXO) and explosive remnants of war (ERW) put at risk lives of thousands. Families, relying on farming for their living, continue to risk their lives to undertake agricultural activities. On 17 July, two

civilians were injured in Donetsk GCA while farming. In June and July, when important farming activities traditionally take place, one civilian was killed and four were injured in mine-related incidents, while farming. According to OHCHR, from 1 January to 31 July 2017, mine-related incidents killed 12 and injured 52 civilians.



Overall, in July 2017, OHCHR recorded 49 civilian casualties (seven killed and 42 injured). This is a 25 per cent decrease compared to the previous month and 41 per cent decrease compared to the same period in 2016. The overall level of hostilities resulting in civilian casualties for the period of January - July 2017 remains high, with 441 casualties, which is a 26 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2016.

Protection concerns: Sexual and gender-based violence

As conflict rages, cases of discrimination and violation of rights of the most vulnerable, including IDPs, women and children are witnessed continuously. Incidents of conflict-related sexual violence and gender-based violence (GBV) prevail on both sides of the 'contact line', however, due to various reasons, such as fear of reprisals or limited access to the survivors many cases usually go unreported. The GBV sub-cluster reports that between November 2015 to August 2017, at least 20,776 cases of GBV were documented in five eastern provinces of Ukraine. The sub-cluster further suggests that women represent some 89 per cent of the survivors, while domestic violence account for 69 per cent of all documented cases. The OHCHR [report](#) on "Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine" covering the period of March 2014 to January 2017 indicates that the ongoing conflict has increased the risks of sexual violence against civilians. Worsening economic situation, particularly in conflict-affected areas, coupled with the consequent destruction of community ties have forced some of the most vulnerable people to use negative survival strategies and coping mechanisms potentially further increasing risks of sexual violence. The report goes on to suggest that the conflict has had a negative impact on the provision of services, particularly in NGCA, limiting access of survivors to these services. While most medical and social institutions have continued to work, the quality of services has deteriorated due to the lack of medical professionals, shortages of necessary specialized equipment and medication.

While grave violation of human rights and protection concerns prevail, funding to address these critical areas continues to shrink. GBV programmes under the [2017 Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (HRP) represent only one per cent of total HRP funding requirement. However, as of 14 August, these programmes have not received any funding, according to Financial Tracking Service (FTS), which means that specific and critical needs of the GBV survivors are yet to be addressed.

Aims to improve coordination and strengthened protection

Against this background, where widespread protection concerns continue impacting the lives of millions, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) advanced in strengthening coordination with the focus on protection. On 3 August, the HCT has endorsed the key sections of the HCT Protection Strategy, which aims to provide a systematic framework to define and address the most urgent and severe protection risks. The Strategy calls for multi-sectoral engagement for all humanitarian partners to take responsibility of ensuring the centrality of protection in humanitarian response in Ukraine. The HCT established Protection Strategy working group will continue to define joint actions to implement the Strategy and provide regular updates to the HCT on progress of the implementation. The HCT also continues to engage in dialogue to advance in key frameworks, such as the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and the Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) mechanisms.

Suffering of millions grows, as ongoing insecurities increase critical needs across all sectors

In parallel, HCT-led 2017 HRP Mid-Year-Review (MYR) process is ongoing. Guided by the evolving and rapidly changing humanitarian and security landscape, the MYR process entails revision of HRP projects, re-prioritisation, analysis of needs vis-a-vis achievements and revision of targets, as necessary. The process is expected to provide a more robust and fit-to-context HRP, enabling the HCT members to adjust humanitarian priorities for the remainder of 2017. The process is expected to be concluded in mid-August 2017.

Challenges persist, but efforts to meet critical needs continue

Looming cold season may lead to more acute needs

Winter in Ukraine is harsh with temperatures decreasing as low as -20 degree Celsius. Cold season starts in late October lasting until late February to early March. Ongoing hostilities, coupled with lack of access and inadequate funding are warranting no opportunity to build some degree of resilience for thousands of people affected ahead of upcoming winter. The protracted nature of the conflict has eroded the already fragile pre-conflict capacities of both, people affected and the IDPs. This means that ahead of the expected cold winter, the humanitarian situation of millions of most vulnerable will once again exacerbate.

Taking stock of previous interventions, humanitarian partners have already started to think ahead and plan required winterization efforts. The Shelter/NFI Cluster has consolidated the 2017-18 Winterization **recommendations**, which focus at priority winterized assistance with geographical breakdowns. According to the cluster, partners will prioritize provision of heating, while also mainstreaming recovery approaches in GCA. In NGCA, interventions will include heating, core winterization items, and shelter insulation. The FSLC has also developed a similar **Guidance note**, which forecasts further increase in food security needs in winter. The Guidance highlights several factors that contribute to an increase, such as the average household food expenditure share, increase in food prices, negative coping strategies, access to food in winter, cost increase in winter and ongoing negative socio-economic impact of the conflict on the most vulnerable. The Guidance note recommends to provide additional food items, complementing existing food parcels during winter months to increase energy.

The WASH Cluster is also in process of adjusting cluster contingency plans to prepare for winter. However, as with other ongoing interventions, these planned winterization activities require urgent funding. Though partners continue stretching resources, timely and sufficient funding is the key factor to put these plans in practice and meet critical needs across all clusters ahead of the winter.

Humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable

While winterization plans take shape, partners actively continue delivering aid in all areas of critical concern to meet the immediate needs. Despite challenges with limited humanitarian access, particularly in NGCA and underfunding, clusters are stretching resources to minimize the impact of the conflict and restore dignity of people affected. Targeted assistance in education, health, food and non-food items, livelihoods, shelter, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene reached the most vulnerable on both sides of the 'contact line'. Where feasible, these efforts included both in-kind and cash transfer modalities.



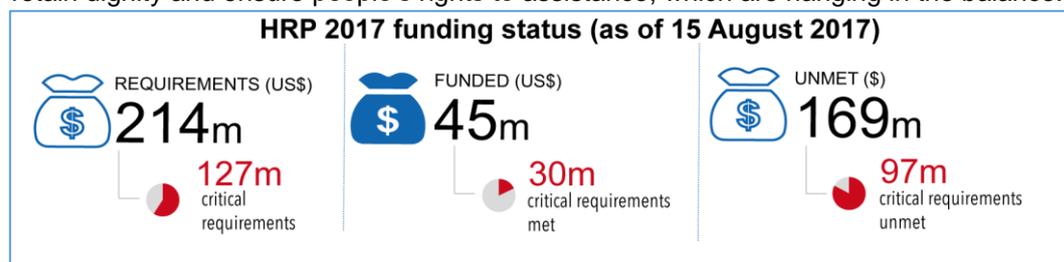
Save the Children is conducting a registration for Multi-Purpose Cash Grants program in Mariinka, Donetsk region. © Save the Children/Tetyana Tesliuchenko

On 27 July, the media sources reported that the 67th convoy of the Russian Federation arrived and delivered assistance. The convoy reportedly consisted of 60 vehicles carrying some 600 tonnes of baby food, medical supplies, shelter and educational materials.

Underfunding continues to prove to be too costly, as life-saving interventions are at stake

Humanitarian funding remains critically low

Despite ongoing multiple challenges, including limited humanitarian access and insecurity, partners stand ready to continue their life-saving operations in all areas of critical concern. However, one of the major obstacles that the partners face is the severe underfunding. As of 15 August, the HRP is funded only at 21 per cent, putting at risk critical projects that cannot wait anymore. As urgency of needs increase, immediate funding must be made to retain dignity and ensure people's rights to assistance, which are hanging in the balance.



To ensure effective use of available resources, record and recognize the contributions, an appeal has been made to donors and partners to reflect contributions pledged, disbursed and received at <https://fts.unocha.org>.

For further information, please contact:

Ivane Bochorishvili, Head of Office a.i., bochorishvili@un.org, Tel. +380 93 674 3154

Jake Morland, New York Desk Officer, morland@un.org, Tel. +1 917 224 0621

Valijon Ranoev, Public Information/Reporting Officer, ranoev@un.org, Tel. +380 50 422 39 43

For more OCHA humanitarian bulletins, see <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/ukraine> | www.unocha.org | www.reliefweb.int | [Subscribe to regularly receive OCHA Ukraine products](#)