

In this issue

Increased needs as winter sets in P. 1

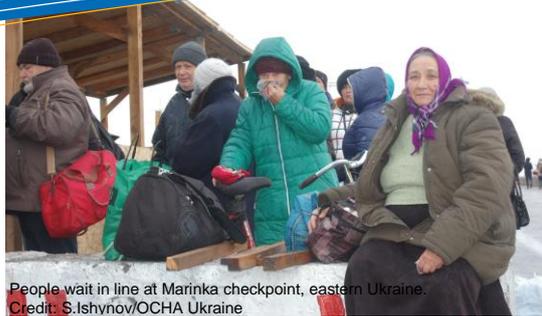
Rise in human cost of continued conflict P. 3

Impact of protracted displacement P. 3

2018 Needs analysis and response planning P. 4

HIGHLIGHTS

- Winter starts and needs across all sectors rise
- Civilians are paying the highest price, as the conflict continues to claim casualties
- 1.1 million people at risk, as water infrastructure hit yet again
- 1.6 million IDPs left with limited hope for future
- 1 in 10 Ukrainians need assistance and protection
- Underfunding poses life-threatening challenge for millions in need



People wait in line at Marinka checkpoint, eastern Ukraine.
Credit: S.Ishynov/OCHA Ukraine

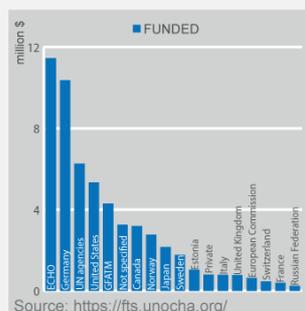
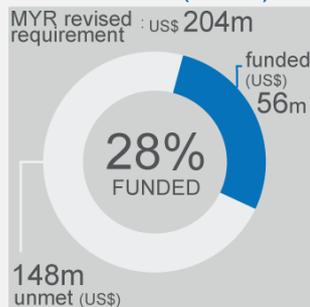
Winter sets in, as misery for millions of Ukrainians grows

Temperatures across Ukraine dropped significantly in October, signaling the early start of the cold season. The protracted crisis in Ukraine, affecting over four million people, becomes particularly grave at this time of the year, when temperatures can plunge below -20 degrees Celsius. With no definitive ceasefire on the horizon, many affected families are entering their fourth winter in the two conflict-torn provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk with limited to no resources to winterize their homes. Families cannot buy enough coal or fuel; neither can they afford warm clothes, when their priority needs are to put food on the table, or to purchase medication.

A recent inter-agency assessment indicated that 58 per cent of households in rural and some 34 per cent of households in urban areas of Donetsk province did not have sufficient supplies ahead of winter, including fuel and other non-food items (NFI)^[1]. The Shelter and NFI Cluster suggests that over 100,000 households of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are critically vulnerable as they are unable to cope with the severe winter conditions without assistance and protection. In addition, due to an increase in utility prices and limited resources, compounded by the absence of appropriate longer-term housing support, several IDP families are reluctantly returning to their places of origin on both sides of the 'contact line', exposing themselves to ongoing hostilities. Winterization is now a top priority for many humanitarian partners. If not immediately addressed, human suffering will further increase – and it will be the children, women, the elderly and people with disabilities who will bear the heaviest brunt.

100,000 
most vulnerable IDP households
unable to cope with severe winter

FUNDING (2017)



Water supply for 1.1 million Ukrainians at risk once again

1.1 million people
at risk of interrupted
water supply



Security incidents near civilian infrastructure increased during the reporting period, despite an agreement reached by parties to the conflict to establish 'safety zones' near the critical infrastructure on 19 July. Of alarming concern is the serious deterioration of the security situation near Donetsk city and Avdiivka. The Donetsk Filter Station

[1] 2017 REACH assessments: <http://www.reach-initiative.org/where-we-work/ongoing-field-presence/ukraine>

(DFS) was shelled three times in 72 hours in the first week of November, putting at risk water supply for over 345,000 children, women, the elderly and people with disabilities, on both sides of the 'contact line'.

On 5 November, additional shells landed near the Verkhnikalmiuske Filter Station (VFS), which supplies about 800,000 people. The risk of leakage of poisonous chlorine gas into the environment is high, as shells have fallen near chlorine storage areas, damaging chlorine pipes. If chlorine treatment of water is interrupted, water will no longer be safe for consumption. This would cause a serious deterioration of health conditions of thousands of most vulnerable people, including children and the elderly. On 8 November, the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), issued a [statement](#) of concern and called all parties to the conflict to adhere to the International Humanitarian Law and protect civilians and infrastructure.

At least 10 incidents of shelling of clean water filter stations or pipelines were recorded from 1 September to 12 November. The WASH Cluster estimates that over 2 million people are at risk of losing access to heating this winter, should inter-dependent water supply and heating systems break down. With no alternative heating solutions in place, the risk of large-scale displacement of families in search of heating and shelter will increase. Thousands are now faced with the mounting challenge to keep themselves warm and stay alive during the harsh winter months ahead. Full and immediate respect for civilian infrastructure by all parties to the conflict is necessary to avoid any further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

Water infrastructure serving millions of civilians in the east has been shelled 10 times in the last 65 days

2 million people
at risk of
heating system collapse



Expected spike in prices may increase food needs

The negative impact of the conflict on the socio-economic situation of millions of people living in both Government controlled areas (GCA) and non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) continues to grow. The Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSCL) warns that some 1.2 million people are currently food insecure on both sides of the 'contact line'. With the expected rise in food prices during the winter season, which is already under way, and increased daily calorie requirements due to low temperatures, may force the most vulnerable families to adopt further negative coping strategies or make stark choices for survival. More and more people have already been forced to reduce the money they spend on food, because of the sharp increase in utility costs, including heating (between June 2016 and June 2017, there has been a 29 per cent increase in GCA). Together with the growing food prices, which will peak in winter, this will have a devastating impact on vulnerable groups. The Cluster reiterates that over 400,000 people, predominantly residing in the two conflict-affected provinces, but also IDPs across the country, are in urgent need of food assistance and protection ahead of the winter.

400,000
people urgently need
food assistance ahead of winter



'The world is no longer interested in plight of conflict-affected Ukrainians' - UN Assistant Secretary-General visits Ukraine

With an aim to bring the human cost of the conflict to the world's attention, and to speak on behalf of people affected and displaced, the UN Assistant Secretary-

General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator (ASG/DERC) Mrs. Ursula Mueller visited Ukraine in early October on a three-day mission. During her visit, ASG Mueller met with key Government representatives in Kyiv and in the field, and visited an IDP collective centre in Sviatohirsk (Donetsk province), where she met families displaced since 2014. She also travelled across the 'contact line' to experience first-hand the challenges that millions of people face, while crossing the 'contact line', which in a way has already become the 'de-facto' boarder.



ASG/DERC Mueller talking to families displaced, Sviatohirsk, Donetsk province.
©OCHA/2017/Volion Ranev

In a briefing to the UN Member States in New York that she made upon completion of her mission, ASG Mueller **stressed** that Ukrainians affected by the conflict were losing hope and felt neglected by the international community. The ASG assured the people of Ukraine that they were not

forgotten by the international community, and highlighted the need for urgent funding for critical humanitarian operations ahead of the winter season. She called on all parties to the conflict to protect civilians, infrastructure, and to enable sustained humanitarian access, noting that an end to hostilities is the only lasting humanitarian solution for millions of people in Ukraine.

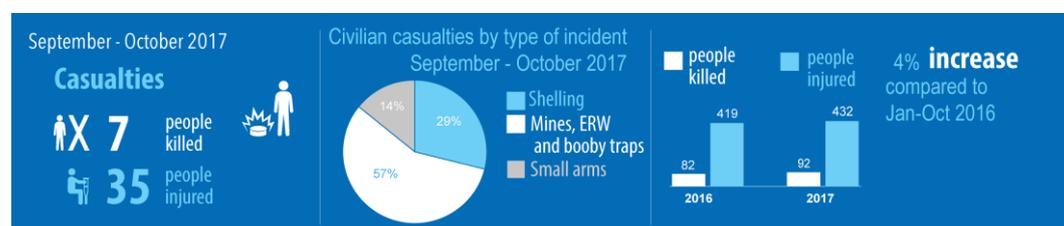
“Conflict-affected families start to lose hope for their future”
– ASG/DERC
Ursula Mueller

Human cost of the conflict is on the rise

Despite a relative lull in hostilities after the reinforcement of the 'school ceasefire' at the end of August, thousands of civilians remain under fire, and, all too often, pay the highest burden in this rarely visible, but invariably deadly conflict. According to OHCHR, between 1 September and 31 October, at least 7 civilians were killed and 35 more injured as a result of the conflict. The two major causes of casualties (death and injury) were shelling and mine-related incidents. In October, mines, Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), and booby traps accounted for almost 67 per cent of civilian casualties. While mine-risk education and demining efforts continue, the lives of thousands of people, including children going to school, women and men visiting markets and shops, and elderly crossing the 'contact line', are exposed to deadly risks on a daily basis. According to estimates of the Mine Action Sub-Cluster, at least 600,000 individuals live in mine-contaminated areas along the 'contact line'.

600,000 people live in
mine-contaminated areas
along the 'contact line'

OHCHR reports that 92 men, women and children were killed and 432 more injured between 1 January and 31 October 2017 – a 4 per cent increase compared the same period in 2016.



The hostilities have so far killed over 2,510 civilians, yet the conflict remains largely unnoticed

During the entire period of the conflict, from April 2014 to 31 October 2017, some 2,515 civilians have lost their lives, while up to 9,000 were injured. With fighting still common in heavily populated areas on both sides of the 'contact line', International Humanitarian Law and protection of civilians is yet to be fully upheld by all parties to the conflict.

People are losing hope

Almost 4 million Ukrainians affected by the conflict find themselves in an increasingly isolated and forgotten protection crisis. The elderly and people with disabilities are facing the consequences of a conflict not of their making, while people in general are losing hope for their future. The psychological impact of the conflict on millions of people is taking its toll and must be addressed, and yet, individuals needing healthcare, including psychological care, do not have access to hospitals. Accessing critical services, including health services, education, housing, documentation, and employment continues to be a challenge. The Protection Cluster estimates that over 15,000 people residing in villages along the 'contact line', where humanitarian access is limited and freedom of movement restricted, have no access to essential services and humanitarian assistance and protection. In addition, over 54,000 children living within 15 km of 'contact line' urgently need access to child friendly spaces, psychosocial support and mine risk education, as reported by the Education Cluster.

1.6 million IDPs need long-term solutions

In the absence of any notable progress towards peace, much of the displacement has become protracted. Most of the 1.6 million IDPs registered by the Government of Ukraine across the country have entered their fourth year of displacement. Their coping capacities have been eroded, as protracted displacement risks worsening their situation. This is affecting the host communities as well as the development of the whole country. Many areas with large number of IDPs (Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv provinces) have experienced additional strains on the underfunded local services. Host communities (locations) also observed an increase in rental and food prices, and a downward pressure on wages and employment opportunities. Displacement has moreover, at times, caused tensions between IDPs and host communities, undermining social cohesion.

The future looks grim for 1.6 million people internally displaced across Ukraine

To find long-term solutions and address protracted internal displacement in Ukraine, on 25 September, UNHCR and UNOCHA, together with other international organizations including donors, civil society, national and local authorities, humanitarian and development agencies, organized a high-level workshop with the participation of the Minister of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MTOT) and the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). The workshop, facilitated by a renowned IDP expert Professor Walter Kaelin, looked at the 'Case Study: Ukraine' on '*Breaking the Impasse: Reducing Protracted Internal Displacement as a Collective Outcome*', which was published in 2016 by Professor Walter Kaelin and OCHA together. Using a three-year perspective to devise common goals, the workshop offered detailed suggestions on what could be done to ensure fair access to social and economic rights, to housing, land, property, livelihoods and social integration of IDPs.

On a positive note, on 15 November, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the “Strategy of IDP integration and the implementation of long-term solutions to internal displacement for the period till 2020”. The MTOT Strategy, which was briefly commented by the civil society and the international organizations, focuses on solving major systemic problems in the integration of IDPs, implementing long-term solutions to internal displacement and ensuring protection of IDPs with the interests of host communities. While this is a positive development, there is a need to apply a whole-of-Government approach and allocate sufficient resources to ensure that the Strategy translates into actions. The international community stands ready to continue supporting the Government of Ukraine to implement the Strategy through finding new ways of alleviating protracted internal displacement in Ukraine.

1 in 10 Ukrainians are now affected by the conflict

The conflict in eastern Ukraine continues to disproportionately impact the most vulnerable. As part of the ongoing Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has finalized the needs analysis across all sectors to inform the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). The Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) indicates that over 4.4 million Ukrainians are affected by the humanitarian crises, while millions of people will need assistance and protection in 2018. There are severe humanitarian needs in the areas along the ‘contact line’, both in the NGCA and in the GCA. Ahead of 2018 planning, recovery and development actions need to be thought through and scaled up to reduce risks and vulnerabilities, and avoid continuous negative impact of this protracted crisis on social cohesion, wellbeing and self-reliance of the most vulnerable.

Millions of Ukrainians are in need humanitarian assistance and protection on Europe’s doorstep

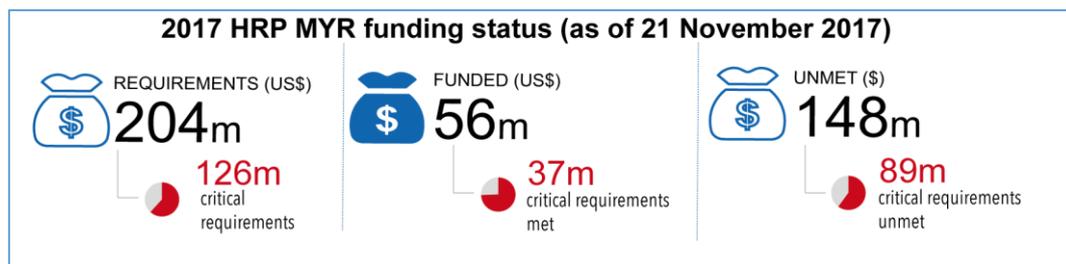
Ongoing efforts to strengthen humanitarian action in 2018

The HCT continues to engage with all partners to develop a solid, needs-driven and inclusive 2018 HRP. On 20 October, a workshop with participation of over 100 representatives from the donor, Government, local authorities, UN and NGO community was held to discuss key elements of a successful 2018 HRP. The workshop resulted in a number of key recommendations on establishing the right balance between humanitarian and development efforts, enhancing efforts to address the needs in hard-to-access areas, and stepping up resource mobilization and advocacy initiatives in parallel with the concurrent humanitarian development actions. It is expected that the Ukraine 2018 HRP will be finalized and launched together with the Government of Ukraine on 4 December 2017.

Underfunding of the 2017 HRP leaves millions in need unattended

Humanitarian partners in Ukraine continue stretching their resources to provide critical relief, recovery assistance and protection to the most vulnerable in need across all sectors, through both in-kind and cash interventions. However, severe underfunding of the 2017 HRP, coupled with limited humanitarian access in areas along the ‘contact line’ and in NGCA continues to pose serious challenges. While acute humanitarian needs across all sectors continue to rise, the start of the winter season, coupled with limited funding towards the 2017 HRP means that it is the children, the elderly, women and people with disabilities who will lose out.

As of 21 November, of the US\$204 million requested, only 28 per cent has been funded. A funding gap of US\$148 million needs to be urgently addressed to both jumpstart and sustain the much-needed winterisation efforts.



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>.

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