

# Operational Update

March 2020

In March, UNHCR and its NGO partners scaled up their support to the Government of Ukraine to mitigate the impact and the spread of COVID-19 on refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced (IDPs) and conflict-affected persons in Ukraine. More on page 2.

In eastern Ukraine, UNHCR strengthened its protection monitoring system to identify the possible deterioration of the protection and humanitarian situation in areas along the contact line during the quarantine period. More on key protection concerns on page 3.

In March, UNHCR focused on raising awareness of COVID-19 prevention measures by installing World Health Organization (WHO) posters in east Ukraine as well as mobilized communities to produce medical masks. More on page 2.

## KEY INDICATORS

**3,971**

Internally displaced (IDPs) and other conflict-affected persons have received legal assistance from UNHCR's NGO partners in 2020.

**50**

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have been counselled on SGBV-related issues in 2020.

**521**

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have benefited from psychosocial support in 2020.

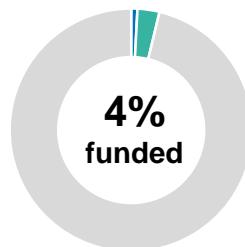


Vasylyna\*, 80, lives by herself in the settlement of Perediliske in Luhanska oblast. She had already been displaced by the conflict but has recently returned to her home. Just like many other elderly persons living near the contact line in eastern Ukraine, Vasylyna has strongly felt the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions. Because of her reduced mobility, Vasylyna struggled to reach the local grocery shop. Having been warned about the impacts of COVID-19 on her health, because of her advanced age, Vasylyna is self-isolating at home, leaving her with no access to local stores and food. Therefore, Proliska (UNHCR NGO Partner) delivered basic food items to Vasylyna so she would have enough to eat during the quarantine. Photo by Proliska.

## FUNDING (AS OF 19 MARCH 2020)

**USD 28.2 million**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2020



- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked
- Unearmarked
- Funding gap

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)\*

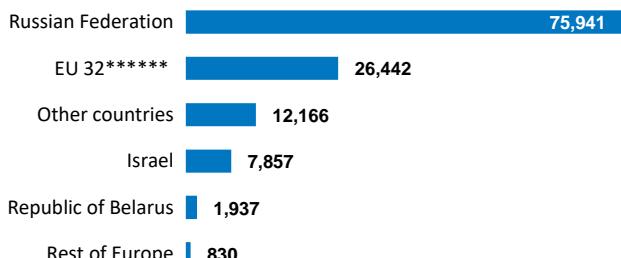
**734,000\*\***

## OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS\*\*\*

**1,68 million\*\*\*\***

## REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE

**125,173\*\*\*\*\***



\*Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA)

\*\*Source: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)

\*\*\*Vulnerable, conflict-affected persons living along the contact line in GCA and non-government controlled areas (NGCA)

\*\*\*\*Sources: Protection Cluster, UNHCR – 2020

\*\*\*\*\*Source: UNHCR PopStats, December 2018

## Operational Highlights

In March, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)'s Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) recorded 19,100 ceasefire violations in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts, a 6 per cent decrease as compared to the previous month. During the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 19 conflict-related civilian casualties: two killed and 17 injured, a 280 per cent increase compared to February. At the same time, the UNHCR-led Shelter Cluster reported that 92 new civilian houses were damaged or destroyed by shelling on both sides of the contact line in March. As a response to recent damages, UNHCR's NGO partner Proliska provided 15 emergency shelter kits to affected families. Photo by Proliska (top right) shows a civilian house in the village of Verkhnotoretske in Donetska oblast damaged by shelling on 8 March. The family that lives in the building received an acute emergency shelter kit composed of tarpaulins to temporarily fix the roof. The house will be eventually repaired by UNHCR's shelter repair programme later in the year.



**Preparedness and Response to COVID-19:** In March, UNHCR scaled up its support to the Government of Ukraine in order to mitigate the risks associated with the spread of COVID-19, especially in conflict-affected areas in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts. To raise awareness on COVID-19 in conflict-affected areas, UNHCR and its NGO partners, Proliska and Slavic Heart, distributed 550 WHO COVID-19 prevention posters in 426 settlements along the contact line (Photo by Proliska on the left). On 31 March, Proliska started a mass information campaign by using loudspeakers provided by UNHCR to communicate COVID-19 prevention messages in isolated communities. In total, ten loudspeakers were provided to Proliska teams in ten different locations along the contact line.

Recordings used in the transmissions were kindly provided by the Donetsk oblast administration.

### Awareness-raising on COVID-19 in non-government-controlled areas (NGCA):

During the reporting period, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner, the Donbas Development Centre (DDC), installed approximately 5,000 WHO COVID-19 awareness posters in non-government controlled areas of Donetska oblast. These materials were placed in medical, public and educational facilities along the contact line, as well as handed over directly to conflict-affected persons during home visits. Photo by DDC (second on the right).



**Mobilizing Communities for their own Protection:** In order to ensure the availability of medical masks in certain settlements near the contact line, UNHCR supported fourteen communities to mobilize and produce masks for themselves, along with persons with specific needs and local healthcare institutions. Photo by Proliska (second on the left, more on page 8).

**Supporting Regional Authorities with “Live” Monitoring:** To monitor the impacts of COVID-19 related legislation and protection concerns, UNHCR strengthened its protection monitoring system in eastern Ukraine to identify any possible deterioration of the protection and humanitarian situation in 104 localities along the contact line. The information is regularly shared with the Donetsk and Luhansk oblast administration to enhance their planning and response. The most recent report can be [read here](#).

**Hygiene kits for Collective Centres:** UNHCR finalized the procurement plan of 132 hygiene kits to be distributed to 43 collective centres that are currently hosting IDPs in Zaporizhzhia, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Donetska and Luhanska oblasts. These kits include cleaning products, mops and paper towels, amongst others things, in order to ensure the cleanliness of collective centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, UNHCR will procure personal protective equipment (PPEs) for social workers who visit elderly persons in isolated settlements in east Ukraine.

**Protection Monitoring at Entry-Exit Checkpoints (EECPs):** In the context of COVID-19 restrictions, movement across the contact line was suspended at all five entry-exit checkpoints on 22 March, impacting those who wish to cross between GCA and NGCA. Therefore, UNHCR and its NGO partners continued to monitor the situation of those unable to cross and to return home to non-government controlled areas (NGCA), supporting some of them. As of the end of March, there were approximately 50 persons who remained stranded on the government-controlled side of the EECP in Stanytsia Luhanska. UNHCR and its NGO partners assisted those waiting to cross into NGCA with water, hygiene items and legal counselling. Photo by Proliska (last on the right).



**Supporting Refugees and Asylum-Seekers with Emergency Cash and Livelihood Assistance:** In March, to provide emergency support to elderly refugees and asylum-seekers who are at greater risk if they contract COVID-19 as well as to alleviate the impact of economic slowdown, **UNHCR assisted 229 refugees and asylum-seekers with medical conditions with emergency cash assistance.** UNHCR also provided WHO materials in six UN official languages to the State Migration Service (SMS) of Ukraine and facilitated the **translation of these to Farsi and Somali.** The information materials provided by UNHCR were placed at the SMS offices and Temporary Accommodation Centers (TACs) in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions. Furthermore, UNHCR supported **three women (two asylum-seekers and one possessing complimentary protection status)** who had received UNHCR's livelihood grants in 2019, in producing medical masks that were subsequently distributed in TACs where refugees and asylum-seekers reside. Please note that TACs are run by the Ukrainian authorities.

## COVID-19 related Protection Risks and Concerns in Ukraine

Refugees and asylum-seekers	Stateless persons	Internally displaced persons	Conflict-affected persons
 Lack access to information about prevention/response in languages they understand.	 Without documents, cannot access free medical care.	 Many rent apartments and face the risk of eviction due to loss of income.	 High concentration of older persons who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Many are dependent on caregivers (public 'territorial centres').
 Asylum-seekers do not have access to medical care, which is free of charge.	 Roma minority face discriminatory restrictions on their freedom of movement.	 Movement restrictions across the contact line causes family separation.	 Medical services are not available in all villages; mobile services have intermittent coverage.
 Loss of livelihoods in informal markets. Without income, risks of eviction rises.	 Poor WASH conditions and crowding in Roma settlements increase the spread of COVID-19.	 Some vulnerable IDPs live in collective centres where COVID-19 could spread quickly.	 Without public transportation, people are cut off from basic services, including food.
 Some live in crowded accommodation centres where the risk of COVID-19 spread increases.		 Psychological stress and loneliness.	 Some villages have limited water, therefore, maintaining hygiene is a problem.
			 Pre-existing psychological stress is compounded.
			 Limited information about prevention and response (in NGCA).

## Key Advocacy Messages for March

- UNHCR remains concerned about COVID-19 reaching conflict-affected areas in eastern Ukraine. If it were to spread to areas along the contact line, COVID-19 could have a devastating impact. **The population in isolated settlements along the contact line includes a large proportion of older persons (41 per cent)** and who have suffered from the additional stress imposed by the armed conflict. Furthermore, the **infrastructure for prevention of COVID-19 (such as plentiful clean water for hygiene) and response (medical facilities) has been weakened** by the conflict. UNHCR calls on authorities to ensure that those most in need are not left without access to health services and basic needs, such as food supplies due to suspended movement and transportation.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, reminded us that COVID-19 “**can affect anyone and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that the global response includes all people**”. Therefore, UNHCR calls on States globally to ensure that their responses to COVID-19 meet humanitarian standards and that the needs of refugees, and all those seeking international protection, are taken into account in planning and implementing the response. UNHCR also called on States, members of civil society, faith-based groups and the business community to exercise leadership in rejecting the stigmatization of, or discrimination against, people who contract COVID-19.
- While recognizing that the Government of Ukraine is entitled to take necessary and proportionate measures to manage risks to public health, UNHCR reminds that **states are bound by international law to respect the protection needs of asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as those who have been forcibly displaced within their own countries**. While a State may decide to close its borders to protect public health, it should not deny people in need of international protection an effective opportunity to seek asylum. Where a State has closed its borders, the processing of asylum claims should continue.
- All States are bound to respect the international principle of non-refoulement. No State should return a person seeking international protection back to a situation where his/her life is at risk or there is a risk of persecution or serious harm because of his or her health status. Health concerns do not justify the systematic use of immigration detention against individuals or groups of asylum-seekers or refugees.

### UNHCR'S AND THE PROTECTION CLUSTER'S RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS:

**[ONE-PAGER] Latest Information Products:** this one-page factsheet summarizes all of UNHCR Ukraine's recent products, reports, thematic factsheets, dashboards and UNHCR-led Clusters' reports.

**[REPORT] Protection Monitoring Report of Settlements along the Contact Line related to COVID-19:** this report is updated regularly and highlights key protection concerns in eastern Ukraine during the quarantine period (access to food, transportation, medical services and clean water), as well UNHCR's response priorities.

**[LIVE BLOG] Live Blog for COVID-19 related activities and response:** this blog informs about key activities implemented by UNHCR and its NGO partners vis-a-vis refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless, displaced and conflict-affected persons in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

**[COVID-19 FLASH INFOS]:** In order to update partners on UNHCR's response to COVID-19, Flash Infos have been produced in March that can be found in [UNHCR's Resource Page](#).

**[PROTECTION CLUSTER'S FACTSHEET]:** this factsheet focuses on protection concerns and partners' response related to the COVID-19 emergency.



### Humanitarian Development Nexus

- On 11 March, [UNHCR jointly with UNDP visited the town of Avdiivka, in Donetsk oblast](#), where training was organized for representatives of NGOs and the local community. The event focused on [exploring opportunities for joint initiatives in the framework of the Humanitarian-Development Nexus](#).
- During the reporting period, UNHCR and UNDP agreed to [coordinate COVID-19 related activities in conflict-affected areas of Donetsk and Luhanska oblasts](#). UNHCR shared information on its Community-Based Protection activities, including [Peaceful Coexistence Projects \(PCP\) that have been redesigned to respond to the COVID-19](#).



### Donor Relations



**Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs visit to east Ukraine:** On 3 March, UNHCR participated in a [high-level mission of the Swedish Foreign Minister](#) organized jointly with the [UN Resident Coordinator's Office, OSCE and UNDP](#). The delegation visited the [Entry Exist Check Point \(EECP\) at Stanytsia Luhanska](#) that remains the only one connecting both sides of the contact line in Luhanska oblast. The Minister was briefed by UNHCR and its NGO partners the Right to Protection and Proliska about activities aimed at easing the crossing for conflict-affected persons. Furthermore, the [Minister observed the functioning of two electric cars operated by UNHCR and Proliska](#) to transport persons with low mobility and with specific needs. *Photo by UNHCR on the left.*

**Ambulance Station at Valuiske inaugurated by the Hungarian Embassy:** On 5 March, UNHCR participated in the [official opening ceremony of a rehabilitated Ambulance Station in the town of Valuiske](#) in Luhanska oblast. The rehabilitation of this facility has been generously financed by the Hungarian Embassy and implemented by UNHCR's NGO partner Proliska. During the opening ceremony, the [Ambassador of Hungary in Ukraine presented medical equipment and tools that have been donated to the Ambulance station](#). The newly opened health centre will be particularly beneficial during the COVID-19 emergency as Valuiske serves as an administrative centre for five neighbouring villages.

**UN Resident Coordinator mission to Luhanska oblast:** On 5 and 6 March, [UNHCR accompanied the UN Resident Coordinator, Osnat Lubrani, to conflict-affected areas in Donetsk and Luhanska oblasts](#). During the mission, which was organized jointly with OCHA and UNDP, the Resident Coordinator visited several [UNHCR-led projects, including PCPs in the towns of Novotoshkivske, Novhorodske and Druzhba](#). These centres rehabilitated by UNHCR and further supported by UNDP provide administrative and social services to conflict-affected persons and serve as an example of Humanitarian-Development Nexus cooperation. *Photo (on the right.)*




**MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE TO REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS**

## Protection of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- On 17 March, UNHCR shared with the State Migration Service of Ukraine best practices adopted in the European Union member states to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers following the outbreak of COVID-19. Information shared included access to territory and asylum procedure, as well as communication with communities.
- Since the outbreak of COVID-19, UNHCR and its NGO partners have been disseminating information on prevention with refugee leaders and their communities over the phone and through social media.
- During the reporting period, Unilever Ukraine donated 25 boxes of Domestos detergent to UNHCR. These sanitary products were delivered to three Temporary Accommodation Centres in Kyiv, Zakarpattya and Odesa regions, where 260 refugees and asylum-seekers reside. Photo by NEEKA on the right.
- On 27 March, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner R2P organized a webinar for 14 administrative appeal courts' judges from different regions of Ukraine. The online event covered asylum procedures, Refugee Status Determination and court challenges in Ukraine.
- In March, UNHCR's NGO partners Rokada and NEEKA initiated Ukrainian language classes online. Lessons are recorded and uploaded to a dedicated YouTube channel making them accessible for refugees and asylum-seekers during the quarantine.


**812**

Persons received Legal Assistance  
(including refugees and asylum-seekers)

in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in March

**39**

Persons accessed education

This number indicates how many refugees and asylum-seekers UNHCR and its NGO partners supported with enrolment to educational institutions in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in March

**16**

Persons received Psychosocial Assistance  
(including refugees and asylum-seekers) thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support in March

**357**

Persons were assisted in accessing healthcare  
(including refugees and asylum-seekers)  
thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support in March

## Livelihood Interventions for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

**73**

Refugees have started their own businesses

with UNHCR self-reliance grants since the launch of the program in 2018

In March, one person of concern found a job as a courier of a food delivering company in Kharkiv thanks to counselling support on employment opportunities provided by UNHCR and its NGO partners.



Samir\*, from Syria, has recently been granted complementary protection status in Ukraine. He has always dreamt of becoming a doctor, which came true in 2012 when he graduated from a Medical University in Ukraine. Soon after graduating he started to work as a urologist at the city hospital of Sumy. After four years of practice, Samir decided to provide individual consultations to those who cannot receive treatment in expensive private or state clinics. Thanks to UNHCR's livelihood grant, he bought a purchased an ultrasound system, which has allowed him to expand his medical practice. This enabled him to significantly increase his income and treat more patients who needed assistance. Photo by UNHCR.

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

- On 11 March, UNHCR and its NGO partner R2P participated in a working meeting with the State Migration Service (SMS) of Ukraine to discuss the proposed amendments to the draft on access to documentation for conflict-affected population and persons at the risk of statelessness.

**18**

Stateless persons  
(or at risk of) (44% female, 56% male) obtained passport or other document certifying nationality

in March thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support

**105**

Stateless persons  
(or at risk of) (41% female, 59% male) received advice on acquisition or confirmation of nationality

in March thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support

**12**

Persons obtained their birth certificates for the first time in March

thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support



## PROTECTION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS

### Protection Cluster

- During the reporting period, the [UNHCR-led Protection Cluster](#) contributed to the [Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\) for the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine](#) launched by the UN Secretary-General on 25 March in conjunction with the Global HRP. The appeal comprises three strategic priorities: one focusing exclusively on the protection of refugees, IDPs, asylum-seekers and host communities particularly vulnerable to the pandemic. The [Ukraine 2020 HRP for the COVID-19 pandemic](#) is tailored to meet response requirements across the country with a focus on both sides of the contact line in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts. Given the differences in the operational context as well as the magnitude of vulnerabilities, this plan calls for the special protection of elderly persons in the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine. Many of them have pre-existing health conditions and with access to healthcare already a key protection and health concern, the COVID-19 virus could have a devastating effect on those who are already at heightened risk.



### UNHCR Protection Activities

- Advocacy related to COVID-19 Restrictions:** In March, UNHCR jointly with an NGO-led coalition advocated with the authorities for the [cancellation of verifications required for pension payments to IDPs and residents in NGCA during the quarantine period imposed by the authorities](#). UNHCR also contributed to the [protection of students with residence registration in NGCA and Crimea from being evicted from dormitories](#). To support persons affected by quarantine measures, UNHCR advocated with the authorities to observe 'humanitarian exceptions' for those wishing to cross the contact line for [during the temporary closure of all EECPs](#) in eastern Ukraine and on the administrative border with Crimea.
- Communities' Capacity Building:** On 13 March, UNHCR's NGO partner Crimea SOS organized a [webinar for IDP-led NGOs](#). During this training, [representatives of eight IDP communities learned how to use internet marketing techniques](#) to better promote their organizations.
- Study Tour for IDPs:** On 16 March, UNHCR's NGO partner Crimea SOS organized a [study tour to the town of Kryvyi Rig for displaced communities](#). During the event, local authorities jointly with IDP-led NGO representatives shared their practices focusing on durable solutions for IDPs.

## ⚖️ Legal Assistance and Protection Counselling

**1,084**

Internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons (67% female, 33% male) received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in March

**2,206**

Persons (69% female, 31% male) benefited from individual protection counselling in March

**27**

Group consultations on protection-related issues were provided to 313 persons (68% female, 32% male) in areas along the contact line in March

## 🤝 Social Accompaniment

- In March, UNHCR's NGO partners provided social accompaniment to 290 individuals (6.6 per cent of them were [persons with disabilities](#)) who needed support in, inter alia, obtaining personal documentation, accessing state services, or receiving authorization to cross checkpoints. As restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted the movement, this had a devastating impact on elderly persons in isolated settlements along the contact line. UNHCR and NGO partners supported them with deliveries of [basic food and other items](#).



UNHCR has already reported about Yevhen\*, from the village of Stepne in Donetsk oblast, in its [December 2019 Operational Update](#). In 2017, 68-year-old Yevhen injured both legs when trying to hide from the shelling. Since then, he attempted to access social payments but could not register as a person with reduced mobility as he lacked his civil documents. Thereofre, UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska supported Yevhen to restore his passport and provided him 'cash for protection'. As a result, he was able to buy himself a walker, thus increasing his mobility and autonomy. In March, UNHCR and Proliska facilitated Yevhen's admission into a specialized care home where he will receive support and medical assistance. Photo by Proliska.



## Psychosocial assistance

**146**

77% Female | 23% Male  
Persons received consultations in March

During the reporting period, UNHCR's NGO partner [Proliska](#) provided 146 vulnerable persons with psychological consultations to help conflict-affected persons deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety, and psychological tension.



## Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

- In March, UNHCR's NGO partner Slavic Heart changed its working modalities to online conferences to ensure the provision of consultations to survivors of SGBV. The Slavic Heart also produced a series of videos on positive coping mechanisms during self-isolation. These were shared with a network of women, men, girls and boys living along the contact line via social media and email. This continuous support remains very important during quarantine and self-isolation, which has a tendency of increasing the risk of SGBV.



## Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)

- In March, UNHCR continued to identify and provide the most vulnerable conflict-affected individuals in eastern Ukraine with [cash for protection](#). This assistance is used to cover different types of needs, ranging from winterization and livelihood items to medical examinations and procedures. In the areas where state services are not accessible, UNHCR and its NGO partners provide [Individual Protection Assistance in-kind](#). In March, 26 persons were supported with IPA (six persons received cash assistance and 20 - in-kind assistance).



Alla\* lives with her husband Dmytro\* and their son Ivan\* near the city of Donetsk. Six years of continuous conflict caused significant hardship for the family. Both Alla and Dmytro are scientists and had been working in a research centre most of their lives. Today, they have all retired but find it challenging make ends meet with what they are entitled to. Since childhood, Ivan has had a hearing impairment. Because of the continued stress imposed by the conflict, Ivan's health deteriorated, culminating in him losing his vision. On his side, Dmytro suffers from diabetes and spinal disease which makes it very difficult for him to move around. To support the family, UNHCR and its NGO partner DDC provided them with a wheelchair, a walker, a blood pressure monitor and other supportive devices. This has allowed the family to free up resources in order to afford an eye surgery for Ivan. Photo by DDC.



## Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)

- UNHCR supports small to medium-scale infrastructure repairs proposed by communities or local authorities in eastern Ukraine. These Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs) aim at creating an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between the displaced populations and host communities and to complement the resilience of IDPs and affected communities. In total, UNHCR has implemented [73 Peaceful Coexistence Projects \(PCPs\)](#) in eastern Ukraine in 2019.



In March, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner Proliska inaugurated a "House of Culture" in the town of Shchastia in Luhanska oblast. This cultural center sustained significant damage when in 2014, during a wedding ceremony, a shell landed near the yard of the building. Therefore, UNHCR rehabilitated part of the building. The other part of the building was repaired by the local community themselves. Today, the renovated "House of Culture" is used for organizing leisurely and educational activities for displaced and host communities. Photo by UNHCR.



## Community Support Initiatives (CSIs)

- UNHCR in Ukraine empowers communities of internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons throughout the country. Community Support Initiatives (CSIs) implemented in the spirit of a [Community-Based Protection](#) approach include a range of activities designed to mobilize and empower communities, strengthen their ability to organize emergency responses and self-advocate with local and national authorities in order to find durable solutions for their own protection. In 2019, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partners has supported [over 260 conflict-affected and displaced communities throughout Ukraine](#). In March, UNHCR placed a special focus on supporting conflict-affected communities with production of medical masks. In total, [fourteen such CSIs will be used for this purpose](#). The medical masks will be provided to the local community and local health facilities.



Meet Maryna, a local activist in the town of Chasiv Yar, in Donetsk oblast, who initiated mass production of medical masks when the local pharmacies ran out of stock, due to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, Maryna with several other local women started to produce these for their families. UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska provided them with sewing machines and tissues. Now the production is going full steam and masks have been already distributed free of charge to residents and health workers. Photo by UNHCR.



## SHELTER / NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFIs)

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

- In March, UNHCR completed the repairs of 102 houses in Donetsk NGCA and 20 in Luhansk NGCA. As part of its light shelter repairs programme, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner DDC also replaced windows in 87 apartments in Donetsk city and its suburbs.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR jointly with DDC distributed 503 solar lamps and 249 blankets to social institutions in Donetsk, Dokuchaievsk, Horlivka, Shevchenko, Styla, Stara Laspa, Bezimenne, Prymorske, Staromykhaylivka in Donetsk NGCA. Photo by UNHCR (on the right) shows the distribution of solar lamps to the kindergarten in the town of Dokuchaievsk.
- On 19 March, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) held a selection committee meeting during which 44 shelters were selected for UNHCR's shelter assistance along the contact line in Donetsk oblast. Given the constraints introduced by the COVID-19 emergency, UNHCR and NRC are developing modalities for the implementation of these activities.



## Voluntary Relocation

**2**

Conflict-affected families  
(six persons) relocated  
to safer homes  
in 2020

In 2019, with the conflict in Ukraine stretching into its sixth year and with many families with specific needs still living under very difficult conditions in affected locations, UNHCR initiated a pilot project of voluntarily relocating families who live in dangerous areas along the contact line. Persons who benefit from this project are carefully selected based on protection vulnerability criteria and a security assessment of the settlements where they are relocated to.

### **Shelter/NFI Cluster**

- On 10 March, the UNHCR-led Shelter/NFI Cluster held a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) to discuss their strategic priorities for 2020 and a need to reinitiate the handover process in light of the recent establishment of the Ministry for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories.
- During the reporting period, the UNHCR-led Shelter/NFI Cluster prepared a sector-specific proposal for the COVID-19 pandemic response that was included in the COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan for Ukraine. This strategy envisages activities aimed at preventing and minimizing the impact of the pandemic for conflict-affected persons, including the delivery of NFIs, providing assistance to IDPs in collective centres, facilitating temporary shelter solutions for medical brigades, mobile spots for medical NFI kits/rapid COVID-19 tests distribution, and increasing capacity of the local health centres for emergency response.

## 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 Veterans, Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons](#). In the case of refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR cooperates closely with the [State Migration Service of Ukraine](#). UNHCR works together with [10 NGO partners](#). UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster. UNHCR together with OCHA also co-leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for 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 unearmarked funds.

The indicative level of funding for the operation is **US \$1,056,916**. This figure is based on contributions earmarked to Ukraine, the indicative allocation of flexible funds and adjustments.

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

**Sweden** 76.4 million | **Norway** 41.4 million | **Netherlands** 36.1 million | **Denmark** 34.6 million | **United Kingdom** 31.7 million | **Germany** 25.9 million | **Switzerland** 16.4 million | **Private Donors Spain** 13.2 million

### SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

**United States of America** 4.4 million | **Canada** 2.3 million | **Morocco** | **Slovakia** | **Private Donors**

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## Links

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

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

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