



THE COST OF INACTION

AS OF 10 AUGUST 2021

Ivan, 66 years old, shows a nearly destroyed house in eastern Ukraine, which he had built for his children. Credit: OCHA/Yevhen Maloletka

THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

The humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine remains dire. More than seven years after the start of armed conflict in the east of the country, people continue to fear for their lives as shelling and the deployment of explosive devices and mines continue. While a comprehensive political solution to the conflict is not yet in sight, Ukrainian families in the east confront a lack of livelihood opportunities, economic shutdowns, restrictions on movement and the COVID-19 crisis. People's access to basic services has also been severely hindered as a result of hostilities, COVID-19-related movement restrictions and cumulative effects of years of armed conflict. The resilience of communities on both sides of the "contact line", dividing eastern Ukraine into areas under (GCA) and beyond Government control (NGCA), has been worn thin, leading to greater reliance on humanitarian assistance.



2M

people are exposed to landmines and explosives.



9M

per-person days of water supply interruption in 2020 – highest since 2017.



660K

children have limited access to a safe learning environment.



340K

IDPs in need and living in undignified conditions in GCA.



3,390¹

civilians have been killed and over 7,000 have been injured as a result of the conflict.

1. From 14 April 2014 to 31 May 2021, taking into account the 298 deaths on board Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 on 17 July 2014.

COVID-19 EXACERBATES EXISTING VULNERABILITIES



Since the "contact line" was substantially closed in March 2020, there has been a **97 per cent reduction in the number of crossings observed**: from 1.2 million crossings per month on average before COVID-19 to 77,000 now.



The restrictions on movement have left **hundreds of thousands of people without access to social entitlements, basic services** and have torn them from their families and friends.



Hundreds of thousands of NGCA pensioners receiving pensions in GCA have been most affected.

PEOPLE CONTINUE TO RELY ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE



3.4 M

Ukrainians, nearly 10 per cent of the total population, require life-saving or protection services.



1.9 M

most vulnerable people have been prioritized to receive assistance.

FUNDING IS URGENTLY REQUIRED

- Despite the severity of the situation and increasing needs, the Humanitarian Response Plan is only 27 per cent funded (\$45.4 million).
- At the current pace, it is projected that the 2021 Response Plan might be one of the least funded since the beginning of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.



Source: Financial Tracking Service (FTS) as of 10 August 2021

THE HUMAN COST OF INACTION IS TOO HIGH

Without urgent funding, critical humanitarian needs will be unmet, leaving thousands of Ukrainians residing in the conflict-torn region without enough coal in winter to keep their houses warm, food to feed their families or clean water to stay safe in times of COVID-19. Ukrainians already on the verge of exhaustion will be pushed to their limits to survive.

WHAT IF ...?

10 CONSEQUENCES IF WE FAIL TO SUSTAIN THE CURRENT RESPONSE



More than 1.3 million people will be denied quality and life-saving health-care services, including psychosocial and mental health support, which is particularly alarming amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, **tens of thousands of children will be deprived of life-saving immunizations** exposing them to vaccine-preventable illnesses.



Almost 1.3 million people might not receive hygiene supplies and information critical for the prevention of infectious diseases.



Over 620,000 people will be at heightened risk of water shortages and resulting hardships caused by cuts to water and sanitation services.



More than 400,000 conflict-affected children and teachers on both sides of the "contact line" **will have no access to a safe and inclusive learning environment**, increasing the risk of drop-outs and the creation of a "lost generation".



Over 117,000 vulnerable persons will struggle to survive the harsh Ukrainian winter. Coupled with COVID-19, these people could face exposure to illness and possibly death. With limited resources, many will face the difficult choice of insulating their homes and purchasing heating fuel, or paying for food or medicine, or meeting other basic needs. In addition, at least **55,000** vulnerable conflict-affected people living in collective centres and social institutions would face **health issues** and have difficulties surviving the winter.



Without life-saving and livelihood support, **80,000** people in need of humanitarian aid **will resort to negative coping strategies**, which include borrowing money, food and reducing expenses on such essentials as medicines.



If the house repair programme is not implemented in NGCA, **3,300 families will remain in their damaged houses** and live yet another year in substandard and undignified conditions.



The number of civilian casualties might increase due to the absence of humanitarian mine action, including surveying, marking, mine risk education and demining.



Children living along the "contact line" will be at higher risk of psychological distress, risky behaviour, family separation and institutionalization due to lack of appropriate protection assistance. People at risk of gender-based violence and its survivors will not have access to appropriate assistance.



The number of IDPs and conflict-affected people resorting to negative coping mechanisms could grow due to their inability to meet basic needs. The risk of an increase in involuntary returns to NGCA and areas near the "contact line" in GCA could increase due to the lack of humanitarian assistance in areas of displacement.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

1

URGENT ACTION.

This will help mitigate the worst impact of ongoing hostilities, COVID-19-related movement restrictions and cumulative effects of over seven years of the armed conflict.

2

IMMEDIATE FUNDING.

Without early funding, humanitarian partners will be unable to address the critical humanitarian needs.

3

ADDRESSING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS.

Without a political solution, the protracted crisis will aggravate, leaving civilians in need of assistance. Continued advocacy and support from all partners on longer-term political, security and development solutions are crucial.

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<https://hum-insight.info/plan/1015>

<https://reliefweb.int/country/ukr>

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine>

<https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/1015/summary>