

THE PROTECTION CLUSTER INCLUDES SUB-CLUSTERS ON CHILD PROTECTION, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND MINE-ACTION



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PROTECTION CONCERNS

- **Security situation:** In September 2017, OHCHR recorded 18 conflict-related civilian casualties: 2 killed and 16 injured.
- **Mine Action:** On September 11, one civilian was killed in an explosion in Mariupol (Donetsk region, GCA), reportedly as a result of mishandling of explosive ordinances.

According to DRC/DDG, since June 2014, 430 people have been killed and 881 injured in mine-related incidents.

Due to the restricted access for humanitarian workers to certain areas and absence of demining and mine risk awareness activities, residents in the conflict-affected areas continue to be at risk of UXOs and ERWs. As a result, residents are unable to undertake farming and agricultural activities and expose themselves to security risks. The areas of key concerns in Donetsk oblast are Petrovskiy, Kieveskiy rayons of Donetsk, NGCA and Yasynuvata (Donetsk region, GCA) and areas close to the contact line, including areas at the existing checkpoints.
- **Freedom of movement:** According to Protection Cluster partner monitoring, the situation at the checkpoints deteriorated in September. Long pedestrian and traffic queues were observed at the Oleksandrivka-Mariinka checkpoint (on the NGCA side). A new computer system was reportedly being installed by the de-facto authorities, resulting in significant delays for people crossing the checkpoint.

On September 10, shelling occurred near the Mayorsk checkpoint, disrupting its operation. Two more shelling incidents occurred near the Mariinka and Mayorsk checkpoints during non-operational hours.

On September 23, residents of the village of Nevelske (Donetsk region, GCA) could not be reached by fire fighters when a heavy fire broke out nearby because of military restrictions on accessing the area. Firefighters were only able to reach the village after the NGO Proliksa intervened with military commanders to allow access to the firefighters. This is not a singular incident when fire brigades have restricted access to settlements along the contact line. Similar incidents have been reported in August in the village of Opytne.
- **Access to healthcare:** According to OSCE SMM, residents of Novolaspa village (Donetsk region, NGCA) have limited access to health care services. The nearest hospital is located 9 km away, in Starolaspa, and there is no public transport available. The situation is of particular concern, as the majority of residents of the village are elderly people and people with disabilities.
- **Food insecurity:** On September 12, the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster (FSLC) published the "[Joint Food Security Assessment on GCA & NGCA-Summary report](#)". The assessment indicates that as many as 26% or up to 800 000 people in Donetsk and Luhansk regions (NGCA) are severely or moderately food insecure, with 5.2% or 150 000 people among those being severely food insecure.
- **Access to essential services:** The conflict continues to limit civilian access to critical water supply. Some 500 residents of Berezove village (Donetsk region, GCA) have limited access to running water since 2015, when the water supply system was disrupted by shelling. Humanitarian actors are trucking in drinking water, but getting water from the distribution point is challenging for people with specific needs, especially for people with disabilities and elderly people.

In the villages Chernenko and Pilne (Donetsk region, GCA) non-drinking water is provided only once a week and no drinking water is supplied.

Due to hostilities, gas pipelines have been destroyed in Popasnyanskiy rayon, Krymske, Mariinka (Luhansk and Donetsk regions). People are facing the winter season without gas, which is needed for heating.

PROTECTION CLUSTER CONTACTS

Anna Rich, Protection Cluster Coordinator, rich@unhcr.org

Sadaqat Shah Roghani, Child Protection Sub Cluster Coordinator ssroghani@unicef.org

Olena Kochemyrovska, GBV Sub Cluster Coordinator, kochemyrovska@unfpa.org

Martin Oubrecht, Mine Action Sub Cluster Coordinator, martin.oubrecht@undp.org

Mykhailo Verych, Age and Disability TWG Coordinator, mykhailo.verych@helpage.org

Olena Lukaniuk, House, Land and Property TWG Coordinator, olena.lukaniuk@nrc.no



In NGCA, **40% of households are spending more than 65% of their budget on food**

Source: "Joint Food Security Assessment", Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, September 2017

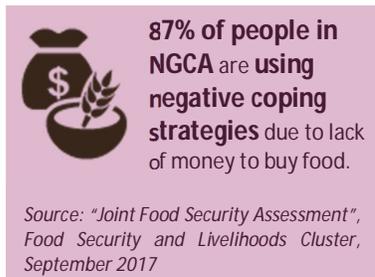
HIGHLIGHTS

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- UNHCR implemented a community-based project in Vesely Kut village (Kirovogradska oblast) where it **provided rehabilitation equipment to a neuropsychological boarding institution**, which houses IDPs with specific needs. This project benefited 27 IDPs and 126 locals.
- Help Age International distributed **hygiene kits to 464 immobile beneficiaries** in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.
- Protection Cluster partners in NGCA **provided psychosocial sessions for 254 elderly people** in Donetsk region in order to improve psychosocial well-being of beneficiaries by reducing stress and alleviating anxiety and depressive symptoms.
- Protection Cluster partner in NGCA provided **social services to 1,275 persons** (mostly IDPs, returnees and children and adults living in the areas along the contact line) through a one-stop shop center, mobile teams, group and individual consultations, psychosocial therapy sessions, capacity building workshops and thematic events.
- UNHCR **implemented a community-based project** that **supported transgender lawyers** who are reaching out to the LGBTI community in order to advocate for their rights, including those from Luhansk and Donetsk, by providing office equipment to improve their capacity. Thirty four persons (IDPs and locals) benefited from the project.
- **3,882 persons received home-based care** and 2,545 persons participated in activities at **Community Safe Spaces** in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts run by HelpAge International.
- In Mariupol, DRC assisted 10 beneficiaries to receive **technical documentation for land plots**, thus allowing further steps for land privatization needed for shelter intervention. DRC also provided **legal assistance** to 2,784 beneficiaries.
- GBV sub-cluster finalized the **referral directory for professionals** available as an interactive [map](#). The directory contains detailed mapping of services in areas of health care, psychosocial support and legal assistance, covering five eastern regions of Ukraine.

ADVOCACY

- On September 7, NRC held a conference in Kyiv on **'Pension Provision in the Context of the Armed Conflict: International Experience and Solutions for Ukraine'**, where speakers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Moldova, shared experiences and practice of paying pensions in situations of armed conflict.
- On September 12, HRMMU launched its **19th quarterly Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine**, covering 16 May to 15 August 2017. The report highlights that while the number of civilian casualties decreased over the reporting period, unpredictable spikes in armed hostilities continued to pose serious threats to human life and safety, damaging residential homes and critical civilian infrastructure.
- A nationwide assessment on **"Economic Costs of Violence against Women in Ukraine"**, commissioned by UNFPA through Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms, was publicly presented in Kyiv on 25 September 2017. The study contains **estimates of lost economic output, service costs and personal costs related to violence against women** to the national economy, and will serve as a strong advocacy tool to eradicate violence against women by providing an economic case for moving the issue up on the political agenda.
- On September 19, the **Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine approved draft law № 6692**, relating to IDP pension payments and establishing a mechanism of paying pensions to people living in NGCA. The draft law also includes regulations for the payment of pensions that were unpaid during the conflict. The draft law now awaits adoption by Parliament in order to take effect.
- On September 25, UNHCR and OCHA, organized a **seminar on prevention of protracted displacement**, with the participation of the Prof. Walter Kaelin. Three working groups discussed possible solutions in three areas: **social and economic rights, HLP rights and integration issues**. Recommendations were shared with the Ministry of TOT and IDPs for consideration during preparation of the Comprehensive Solutions Strategy.
- On September 25, HRMMU presented its **Thematic Report on the situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol (Ukraine)** covering the period of 22 February 2014 to 12 September 2017.
- On September 26, NRC organized a **public discussion** in Kyiv, on **'Addressing Loss of HLP rights of Internally Displaced and Conflict-Affected People in Eastern Ukraine: First Steps Towards Restitution/Compensation'** with the participation of 45 representatives of humanitarian community, inter-Governmental organizations, Ukrainian judicial, legislative and executive authorities, as well as international experts.



TRAININGS/EVENTS

- Help Age International provided two **trainings** for 36 employees of territorial centers and boarding institutions of Luhansk oblast **on social care of older persons**, older persons with disabilities, and use of assistive devices.
- On September 25, UNFPA organized a nation-wide forum **"Together for Ukraine Free of Violence against Women"** aimed at establishing a wide coalition of partners from government authorities, member states, international organizations and NGOs in order to make a critical breakthrough in ensuring availability of good quality survivor-centered services and eradicating violence against women in Ukraine.
- In September, Crimea SOS conducted a **legal awareness meeting** in Zhytomyr with 52 IDPs. The issues discussed included verifications of the place of residence of IDPs, rights of people during and after the inspections; renewal of social payments and pensions and procedure for the restoration of pension payments.