

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



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## PROTECTION CONCERNS

- **Civilian casualties:** In February, OHCHR recorded 12 conflict-related civilian casualties (2 killed and 10 injured). This is a 300% increase compared to January. Overall, mine and ERW-related incidents accounted for 50% of casualties.
- **Mine contamination:** On 23 February, 2 people died and 1 was severely injured when a minivan exploded on a landmine at Olenivka checkpoint (Donetsk NGCA). On 26 February, 3 people were wounded by a landmine when collecting firewood in the forest near Hrodivka (Donetsk GCA).
- **Security:** Compared to the previous month, an increase in hostilities, which damaged infrastructure on both sides of the contact line, was observed. At least 86 private houses were damaged due to shelling in GCA and NGCA. In GCA, 43 houses were damaged or destroyed, which is 2.5 times more than in January 2019 and 4 times more than in December 2018.

On 2 February, 4 people organizing a funeral came under shooting in Chermalyk (Donetsk GCA). The bus of the funeral service immediately left the area and workers had to hide from shooting in the grave.

On 4 February, the staff of a local NGO delivering humanitarian assistance came under shelling in Zolote-4 (Luhansk GCA) and Travneve (Donetsk GCA).

On 26 February, 7 houses were damaged by shelling in Zolote. Local authorities convened a meeting to identify alternative accommodation for affected people.

- **Freedom of movement:** In February, five people died due to serious health complications when crossing the contact line and one suffered a stroke.

On 14 February, 46 persons were stuck between the checkpoints, as the NGCA side allowed them to pass towards GCA (Mayorske checkpoint) when the checkpoint had already closed. 27 people returned back to NGCA and 19 people were allowed to cross into GCA.

The residents of Kommunarivka (Sarabash), Pischane, Kaminka, and Telmanove (Boikivske) (Donetsk NGCA) have no public transport connection, as the only service provider refused to work on the route due to bad road conditions.

- **Housing, land and property rights:** Residents of Mykolayivka, Novotroitske, and Kodema and nearby villages (Donetsk GCA) are required by local authorities to pay land tax on agricultural land although it cannot be cultivated due to the armed conflict.
- **Access to basic services:** In February, the water supply to 3,500 residents in Snizhne (Donetsk NGCA) and about 5,000 people in Luhansk and nearby settlements was cut off due to the leakage in the pipeline near the contact line.
- **Access to education:** Children from Blahovishchenka and Kolisnykivka (Luhansk GCA) could not go to kindergartens and schools for almost one month, as school buses could not access the settlements due to bad road and weather conditions.

### PROTECTION CLUSTER CONTACTS

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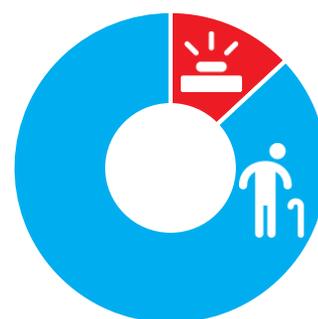
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**13%**  
mine victims

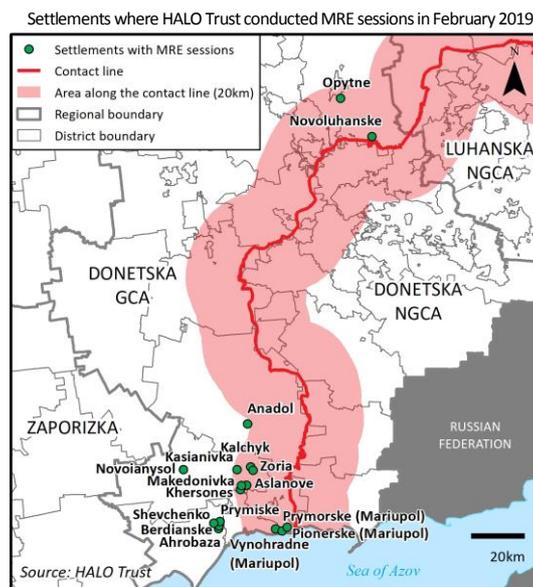
**87%**  
problems with health

**16 people died**  
while crossing checkpoints in 2019

## HIGHLIGHTS

### PROTECTION RESPONSE

- On 21 February 2019, UNHCR facilitated the delivery of a joint IOM/WHO/UNICEF **humanitarian convoy** to Donetsk, bringing medical equipment, diapers for adults, and hygiene kits for social institutions, etc.
- Protection Cluster partners in Donetsk NGCA provided protection counselling and assistance to 850 persons, including 43 IDPs and 32 returnees, and delivered 6 awareness raising sessions on GBV for 72 persons.
- The HALO Trust conducted 47 MRE sessions for 2,731 people in 17 settlements near the contact line, through individual household visits in the evenings and on the /weekends in order to reach the adult population. **Nine new hazardous areas** with a total surface area of almost 1.6 million m<sup>2</sup> were identified and marked.
- DRC-DDG conducted **205 MRE sessions** for 4,492 people at Stanytsa Luhanska and Mayorske checkpoints.
- HelpAge International provided emergency kits to 17 older people affected by shelling in Zolote and Novoluhanske, and supported 3,162 older people through **6 Community Safe Spaces in Donetsk and Luhansk regions**.
- Polish Humanitarian Action provided multi-purpose cash grants to 1,500 older people from Svitlodarsk, Lastochkine (Donetsk GCA), Zolote-4, Peredilske, Krymske, and Triokhizbenka (Luhansk GCA).
- Proliska **supported 6 communities along the contact line**, helping to clear blocked roads from snow in Blahovischenka, Bakhmutka and Zhovanka; providing humanitarian assistance to a hospital in Siversk; providing internet equipment to a school in Chermalyk; facilitating travel of children for extra-curricular activities from Myronivka.
- NRC provided **information, counselling, legal assistance, and training to 1,860 people**, out of whom 33% were from NGCA. The main protection concerns included pension payments, issuing electronic passes, acquiring death certificates, inheritance in GCA.
- Right to Protection provided **protection consultations to 2,666 people**, of them 57% were older people. The largest number of people consulted were in Donetsk region (59 %) and Luhansk region (23%). Out of the total number of beneficiaries in February – 38% were NGCA residents, 22% reside near the contact line and 37% were IDPs.
- Save the Children **handed over Avdiivka Community center, providing PSS to conflict-affected children** to local authorities, which will maintain the center to ensure its sustainability.
- UNFPA psychosocial support mobile teams provided targeted assistance to 429 GBV survivors. Over 20 GBV survivors received **safe space accommodation and complex psychosocial support** at seven UNFPA-supported shelters.
- Ukrainian Frontiers **provided psychosocial support** to 150 IDP families through adaptive cultural center "AKCenter" in Kharkiv.
- The programme "Radnyky" supported by Stabilization Support Services provided **methodological support consultations on IDP social protection issues** to 807 social protection specialists and 196 NGO representatives.



### ADVOCACY

- Protection Cluster prepared an [Advocacy Note on the Voting Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine](#), calling on national authorities to adopt legislative changes to remove existing legal and practical barriers to IDPs' full participation in elections, including at local level, in line with international standards and to take special measures to ensure unimpeded access of IDPs with specific needs to polling stations and electoral events.
- The Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities organized a conference on voting rights of IDPs. Participants called on Parliament to adopt draft Law 6240 and remove existing barriers for IDPs' full participation in elections.
- DRC-DDG and UNICEF organized a roundtable on the Results of Child Mine Victim Needs Assessment, conducted during September-December 2018. Recommendations of the roundtable on comprehensive support to children and their families will be shared with stakeholders responsible for mine victim assistance programming in Ukraine.

### TRAININGS/EVENTS

- OHCHR delivered a **session on prevention of arbitrary detention, torture and conflict-related sexual violence, HLP rights, and freedom of movement** for 42 officers of the Civil-Military Cooperation unit, who will be deployed to Donetsk and Luhansk regions.
- NRC conducted **2 training on the court practice of the European Court of Human Rights** for 11 judges from the courts of Luhansk region and 13 judges from the courts of Donetsk region.
- Terre des Hommes conducted **2 trainings on Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action** for 42 participants in Donetsk and Luhansk (GCA).
- Group of Influence conducted a training for media representatives on the **procedure of temporary change of the voting place** to ensure that IDPs can exercise their voting rights.