

Situation report # 4
October–December 2018

Ukraine humanitarian crisis



Procurement of medicines and medical supplies.
Photo: WHO Ukraine

For the reporting period¹



2.2 million people
are in need of
essential health
services



28 conflict-related
injuries were
recorded during the
reporting period



9 conflict-related
deaths were
recorded during the
reporting period



2 million
people
live in mine-
contaminated
areas along the
contact line

Key figures

Highlights

WHO emergency programme in eastern Ukraine	
40	Health and Nutrition Cluster partners
900 000	People targeted by Health and Nutrition Cluster partners in 2018
45%	Funded operations in 2018 (US\$ 2 223 000 allowed WHO to cover the most critical response activities in 2018.)
4 900 000	US\$ requested for operations in 2018

In response to the humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine, WHO and partners provide life-saving health services to conflict-affected populations on both sides of the contact line.

With the support of WHO:

- Over 150 health-care specialists working in conflict-affected areas improved their knowledge and skills on infection prevention and control.
- The Ministry of Health of Ukraine works on enhancing access to mental health care services in the country. Implementation of the WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) will allow expansion of the provision of mental health services at community level.
- Thirty laboratory specialists are better prepared to improve the surveillance system and prevent disease outbreaks.
- Over 32 000 patients in conflict-affected areas will benefit from medical supplies for trauma care, surgery and blood transfusion.

¹ Data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA).

Situation overview

After nearly five years of crisis in eastern Ukraine, millions of people on both sides of the contact line still need humanitarian assistance. A lack of trained health-care workers and appropriate health-care services can result in an increase in avoidable deaths, diseases and disabilities.

Martial law was introduced for 30 days in 10 regions of Ukraine on 28 November 2018, following a naval incident that occurred on 25 November near the Kerch Strait (between the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea). The Ministry of Health identified a list of health facilities which were ready to provide the necessary medical assistance in case of heightened hostilities. A reserve of beds, stocks of medicines, medical supplies and blood supplies was reported to be readily available. No changes in the provision of health-care services to the population were reported in the regions where martial law was introduced.



The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Source: Ukrainian Center for Social Data.

Leadership and coordination

WHO leads health sector partners to jointly respond to the health needs of conflict-affected people in eastern Ukraine to improve health outcomes. The Organization ensures that gaps are filled through effective coordination, and supports resource mobilization efforts to address the most pressing health needs.

In October–December 2018, WHO trained over 150 health-care workers in infection prevention and control at the secondary and tertiary health-care levels, improved laboratory surveillance in conflict-affected regions and procured medicines and medical supplies for health facilities in eastern Ukraine.

Together with the Ministry of Health, WHO developed a questionnaire for the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) survey that was due to start in January 2019 in the eastern regions of the country. The survey is aimed at assessing current EMS capacities, identifying gaps and providing recommendations for improvement of emergency health-care services and prehospital care in Ukraine.

Partner coordination

Since the beginning of the conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014, WHO has led the Health and Nutrition Cluster, coordinating over 40 national and international health partners. Additionally, WHO co-chairs two Health and Nutrition Cluster working groups:

- the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group
- the HIV/TB Working Group.

By the end of 2018, WHO and Health and Nutrition Cluster partners had submitted inputs to the [2019 Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#). The HRP lays out a roadmap for 43 United Nations, national and international organizations to implement collective humanitarian action to provide aid to civilians across different sectors, such as food, shelter and household items; winterization support; and access to clean water, education and adequate health care. WHO has requested US\$ 6.5 million for interventions in secondary and tertiary health-care facilities.

Information and planning

As part of Health and Nutrition Cluster coordination and capacity-building activities, the Cluster conducted an information management (IM) workshop in December 2018 with the objective of introducing to partners

the newly developed online IM tools. Participants from 17 organizations attended the workshop: “Online Data Collection and Information Communication, Dashboards and Map Viewers”. The workshop introduced new online survey forms that are designed to streamline and map partners’ activities across the crisis affected areas. These new tools will improve the analysis of gaps in the response and strengthen planning and coordination among partners.

Health operations and technical expertise

Improving infection prevention and control in hospitals

Over 150 health-care professionals working in conflict-affected regions were trained in infection prevention and control. Four training sessions were organized by WHO in cooperation with the National Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education, Kyiv. The training curriculum included the basics of infection prevention and control, as well as standards and norms of disinfection in health-care facilities. Over 90% of the participants reported that they had benefited from this training.



Infection prevention and control training in Luhansk region.
Photo: WHO Ukraine

The project ["Improving infection prevention and control in hospitals"](#) is supported by the

Government of Japan and aims at improving disinfection capacities through the training of health-care workers and the provision sterilization equipment to selected hospitals.

Improving the surveillance system

In October–December 2018, WHO continued its efforts in improving laboratory surveillance in conflict-affected areas. Six laboratory mentoring visits were conducted to the non-government-controlled areas (NGCA) of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Apart from these mentoring activities, WHO carried out training on quality management in laboratories for 16 laboratory specialists.

WHO also coordinated the working group of laboratory health specialists and supported the implementation of international standards of medical laboratory performance. A special focus was placed on biohazards and biosafety, which in the context of emergencies are vital to improving epidemiological surveillance.

Improving access to mental health services

The mhGAP Planning and Adaptation Workshop was organized by WHO with the support of the Ministry of Health. It marked the beginning of the national implementation of mhGAP and expanding mental health care coverage countrywide. The workshop brought together various stakeholders including service providers and users, local health managers, policy-makers, international and national nongovernmental organizations, donors and representatives of the educational sector. Participants discussed key aspects of the development of community-based mental health services and the integration of mental health services into primary health care and other sectors.



“Mental health specialists should work together with other health-care and social workers to treat the person, not the disease.”

Oleg Rudnitskiy, psychiatrist, WHO-supported mobile community mental health team, Slovyansk mental health hospital (workshop participant)

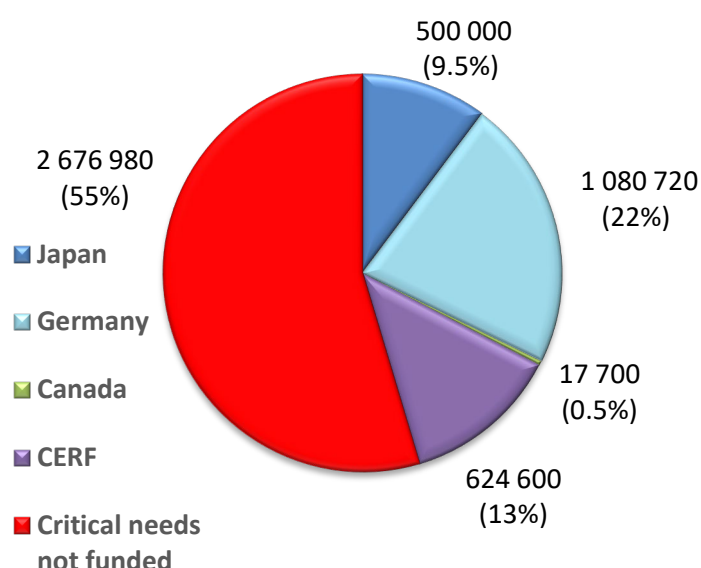
Operation support and logistics

With financial support from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), WHO procured medicines and medical supplies for trauma care, surgery and blood transfusion that will allow the treatment of over 32 000 patients. The supplies will be distributed among health-care facilities in the conflict-affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the beginning of 2019.

In addition, 11 oxygen concentrators, 18 infusion pumps, 8 neonatal infrared heaters and one artificial lung ventilator were procured for the Luhansk NGCA in partnership with Médecins du Monde (MDM).

Finance and administration

WHO funding request
in 2018 Humanitarian Response
Plan (US\$)



Financial support from the governments of Germany, Japan and Canada, along with the contribution of CERF, allow WHO to cover the most critical response activities in accordance with the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan.

WHO's strong presence in Ukraine has allowed the Organization to continually assess the situation of hospital infrastructure, supporting service delivery through provision of essential medicines and targeted rehabilitation of health facilities.

Visit the WHO Ukraine web page: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/countries/ukraine>

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