KEY HIGHLIGHTS

• Project HOPE’s response to the Ukraine crisis continues to expand as we procure medicines and medical supplies for use in both Ukraine and bordering countries and identify local partners both regionally and in Ukraine to provide immediate relief to impacted populations.

• Over two million refugees have left Ukraine, and that number continues to increase with expectations that the number displaced by the conflict could reach 10 million.

• Psychosocial and mental health needs are the most urgent health concerns for refugees at this time, requiring a rapid scale up of psychosocial support, mental health and protection activities.

• Project HOPE’s team in Ukraine continues to expand. Recent assessments are indicating severe and worsening shortages of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies as infrastructure and supply routes are destroyed by Russian forces.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Fighting continued unabated across Ukraine during the reporting period. A senior U.S. defense official estimated that Russia has launched over 700 missiles in Ukraine since the invasion began.¹

On March 9, a maternity hospital in Mariupol was destroyed during a Russian airstrike. The devastation follows ongoing accusations from global watchdogs of human rights and laws of war violations by Russia. Ukrainian officials estimate at least 17 were killed in the hospital attack, including “women near childbirth”.² According to Ukraine’s Health Ministry, more than 61 hospitals have been destroyed by Russian forces since the conflict began.

Meanwhile, Russian troops made significant gains toward the southern cities of Kharkiv and Mykolayiv. No advancements were made by Russia toward urban centers in the north—specifically the country’s capital, Kyiv, and Chernihiv. However, heavy fighting has been taking place near Chernihiv.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported 573 casualties in Donetsk and Luhanska oblasts in Eastern Ukraine, where fighting pre-dated the February invasion. The Commissioner warns that these figures are likely to be too low due to poor communications and limited access in eastern Ukraine.³

According to the OHCHR, 516 civilians, including 37 children, have died since the Russian invasion began last month. An additional 908 are estimated to have been...
wounded. These numbers are believed to be underestimates as capturing the true extent of fatalities amidst the violence remains challenging due to reporting delays and inability to assess the scope amidst constant fighting.\textsuperscript{iv}

The bombardment has taken a heavy toll on infrastructure, causing disruptions in electrical lines as well as gas and water supply systems. This is even more concerning considering temperatures in Ukraine are frequently below freezing. There are frequent reports of open fire on civilian spaces, including hospitals and schools, in areas on both sides of the contact line in Eastern Ukraine.\textsuperscript{v}

**HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

As the war in Ukraine escalates, humanitarian conditions in the country and the outflow of refugees to neighboring countries have worsened.

As a result of damage and access constraints, around 12 million people – nearly 30 percent of the entire population – require life-saving humanitarian assistance according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).\textsuperscript{vi} Project HOPE’s personnel in Ukraine and surrounding countries affirm needs across health, mental health, protection, and food sectors.

The United Nations has predicted that 10 million Ukrainians – approximately one quarter of the population – could be displaced by the conflict. Of those, roughly 4 million could become refugees in other countries over the weeks to come.

Polish government officials have been surveying refugees crossing the border since the exodus began. They shared with Project HOPE that more and more refugees are coming from Eastern Ukraine – 8% in the initial days of the conflict to now 75% in the last two days. Two percent of refugees did not have friends or relatives in Poland in the first three days of the Russian offensive, compared to 92% now.

Frequent Russian aerial bombardments are believed to be preventing hundreds of thousands more from fleeing the devastation.\textsuperscript{vii} A “green corridor” set up in an agreement between Ukraine and Russia to help thousands of people trapped in the northern outskirts of Kyiv was declared a failure by local authorities after the Russian military blocked convoys trying to pass.\textsuperscript{viii}

On March 8, an NGO convoy carrying humanitarian aid was reportedly destroyed in crossfire. UNOCHA and United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) have established an inter-agency cell to mitigate such threats.

Early on March 9, the Russian Federation agreed to six humanitarian safe passage routes to evacuate people from major population centers— safe use of these routes had not been confirmed.\textsuperscript{ix} Russia has violated multiple such agreements across the country since fighting began.

In Ukraine, it is estimated that 12 million people living in affected areas are stranded, unwilling or unable to leave due to active fighting and security risks, destruction of bridges and roads, and lack of resources or information on where to find safety.\textsuperscript{x} In these areas in particular where there are disrupted supply chains, there are increasing reports of food insecurity, lack of medicines and supplies, and need for basic items including winter clothes. The UN-led Protection Cluster for Ukraine is reporting the most vulnerable internally displace people (IDPs) include children, women and girls, persons with disabilities and older people.

Data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) show the speed of the Ukraine exodus is already bigger than the migration crisis of 2015, when 1.3 million asylum seekers from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Africa, fleeing poverty and wars, entered Europe. More than 2,155,271 Ukrainians have fled the conflict since the invasion began on February 24. More than half have headed to Poland—now home to over 1,294,903 refugees.\textsuperscript{xii}
PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE’s teams are working in Poland, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine. We’re coordinating with local NGOs, hospitals, and government officials across each country, as well as the WHO Health and Logistics Clusters, Ministries of Health, and other authorities.

In Ukraine, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Expansion of our team in Lviv to support health activities in-country.
- Providing a grant to a Ukrainian non-governmental organization to purchase and transport pharmaceuticals and medical supplies to civilian hospitals.
- Assessment of hospitals and health facilities to determine needs and how best Project HOPE and partners can fulfill gaps.

In Moldova, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Supporting SAMU’s mobile medical team to serve refugees crossing the Ukraine/Moldova border as per the request of WHO and the Moldovan Ministry of Health.
- Procurement and delivery of key non-food items (blankets, bedding, towels) to the Ministry of Social Protection to serve refugees.
- Mobilization of an Interagency Emergency Health Kit (IEHK) and insulin to the Ministry of Health to support refugees.

In Poland, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Procurement of key medical supplies in Poland to be delivered this week to a children’s hospital in Lviv, Ukraine.
- Development of key relationships with public hospitals and local NGOs to continue supplying medicines and medical supplies into Ukraine and explore training opportunities for medical personnel.
- Assessing needs and contingency planning for health facilities in Poland as refugee numbers increase demand on the Polish health system.
- Establishing warehouse space and a sustainable logistics corridor into Ukraine.
- Assessing protection and mental health needs and identifying local NGOs to provide support to in this sector.

In Romania, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Supporting local NGOs to provide mental health support to refugees and hygiene/shelter needs.
• **Sourcing hygiene kits, medical supplies, and medicines for transport into Ukraine as well as for the refugee population.**

• Assessment of border entry points to determine needs of refugee population and transit centers.

• Establishment of relationship with key partner to send supplies into Odessa, and the mobilization of an IEHK and hygiene items to Romania.

Project HOPE will continue to closely monitor the situation as it unfolds in order to respond to the most pressing health and humanitarian needs among affected populations.

SOURCES
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