

Conflict in Ukraine

Situation Report #6



14 March 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Project HOPE has delivered 22 pallets of medicine and medical supplies to a hospital in Lviv as the Russian invasion has destroyed vital infrastructure and cut off supply routes.
- Project HOPE has established several grantee partnerships with NGOs in Ukraine, Poland, and Romania to support humanitarian response efforts.
- Project HOPE's partner, SAMU, is on the ground providing medical care to refugees in Moldova.
- 2.7 million have fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion in late February. The number displaced by the invasion could reach 10 million according to some estimates.
- Trauma, separations, instability, and other stressors are making psychosocial and mental health needs among the most urgent. A rapid scale up of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) as well as protection programming is required to meeting growing needs.



Project HOPE staff delivering supplies of pediatric cardiac sutures to University Children's Hospital in Poland, which is receiving pediatric patients from Ukraine in need of oncological and other specialty care. Project HOPE has been a partner of the hospital since 1974.
Photo by James Buck for Project HOPE, 2022

SITUATION OVERVIEW

During the reporting period, Russia continued its military offensive across Ukraine. Russian troops came their closest to date—within 9 miles—of Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, over the weekend.ⁱ Fighting there concentrated in the northwestern suburb of Irpin, situated close enough so that the sounds of sustained fire could be heard in parts of Kyiv.

Meanwhile, the conflict escalated to new heights near NATO's borders, in the country's west—a location once thought to not be a target of the invasion. A Russian attack on the Yavoriv military installation in western Ukraine, some 15 miles from Poland, left at least 35 killed and 134 injured.ⁱⁱ

Until now, Ukraine's west had seen the least fighting and, as a result, received many internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the east, north, and south. The western city of Lviv, in particular, has become a functional "hub" for IDPs.

Mauripol, located in the south and bordering the Sea of Azov, remained besieged over the weekend. Russian troops have surrounded the city—which has been cut off from food, water, heat, and medical supplies for over a week while enduring heavy shelling. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced a humanitarian convoy is expected to arrive in Mauripol on Sunday—though whether Russian troops will allow its entry remains a question.ⁱⁱⁱ

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), at least 1,663 civilians have been injured and 596 have been killed since the Russian invasion began on February 24.^{iv} These figures are expected to be lower than the real toll because limited access has impacted reporting efforts.

Less than a month into the conflict, scores of hospitals, schools, residential homes, and other essential infrastructure (including electric, gas, and water lines) have been destroyed by Russian military attacks.^v Such widespread damage is likely to worsen deteriorating conditions across health and other essential sectors in the coming weeks.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has received credible reports of the use of cluster munitions and other internationally banned weaponry in heavily populated areas.^{vi} Cluster munitions have been condemned for their indiscriminate, devastating damage and are known to impact civilian populations decades after a conflict has ended.

On March 13, Jens Stoltenberg, the head of NATO, warned that “Russia’s false claim of Ukraine storing biological weapons could be used by the Kremlin as a pretext for chemical attacks.”^{vii} In addition to being a war crime, the use of chemical weapons in an urban environment would have dire consequences for local populations.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have raised alarms concerning the prevalence of separated families in Ukraine and among those fleeing to bordering countries. In a joint statement, the agencies stated, “Children without parental care are at a heightened risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation. When these children are moved across borders, the risks are multiplied. The risk of trafficking also soars in emergencies.” As such, mental health, psychosocial, and protection needs are growing among conflict-affected populations on both sides of the Ukrainian border.^{viii}

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Less than a month into the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the impact of fighting on lives and livelihoods has been staggering. Almost 2.7 million Ukrainians have fled since the invasion in late February. To date, Poland has absorbed the largest share—over 1.6 million (60%)—refugees.

Relief agencies estimate the number of Ukrainian refugees may grow to up to 10 million as fighting ensues—though hostilities continue to thwart evacuation efforts in major population centers in the country’s east and north. Over the reporting period, some large-scale evacuations were successful, if repeatedly delayed by fighting, including some of the hardest-hit areas, like Mariupol.

Extensive damage to infrastructure—from schools and hospitals to gas and electricity lines—means those unable to leave have limited access to essential goods and services. In besieged cities, like Mariupol, relief organizations fear that death due to dehydration, hunger, and access to medicines is becoming a growing possibility for inhabitants.

Prior to the conflict, Russian and Ukraine supplied 30 percent of wheat and 20 percent of corn on the global markets. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) project that prolonged hostilities between the countries may spurn rises in global food prices. Such a development is even more worrisome considering that the Nutrition Cluster estimates that more than 2 million Ukrainian children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding women are in need of life-saving nutrition assistance.

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE has deployed teams to 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. Our teams in neighboring countries have observed an array of essential needs—including health, MHPSS, and NFIs—among Ukrainian refugees. Protection and MHPSS needs are particularly alarming considering the trauma and separations experienced by many fleeing the conflict. Absorption of Ukrainians by local communities, meanwhile, limits ability to track refugees and their needs, thereby posing a potential protection risk.

Project HOPE's deployments inside Ukraine and partnerships with local organizations have revealed similar needs among conflict-affected populations. In addition, Project HOPE is drawing upon its previous experience in the Syria crisis to develop a comprehensive chemical weapons response should fears of such an attack become realized.

In Ukraine, Project HOPE's activities include:

- Delivery of 22 pallets of antibiotics, surgical supplies, and other medical necessities to First Emergency Territorial Hospital in Lviv
- Provision of a grant to a Ukrainian non-governmental organization to purchase and transport pharmaceuticals and medical supplies to civilian hospitals throughout Ukraine
- Mobilizing two Interagency Health Kits (IEHKs) to Ukraine, expected to arrive later this week, as well as two pallets of International Health Partner UK's Emergency Health Packs, expected to arrive next week, to Lviv

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. SAMU's teams are mostly seeing children with acute respiratory infections and adults in need of chronic disease management, including diabetes and hypertension
- 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:

- Establishing a partnership with a key children's hospital to support efforts specifically for Ukrainian children in need of care
- 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:

- Provision of a grant to Estuar Foundation, a local NGO that will provide mental health support to refugees.
- Provision of a grant to Jesuit Refugee Services Romania, a local NGO that will provide shelter and hygiene kits to refugees.
- Sourcing additional hygiene items, 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.

ⁱ <https://abcnews.go.com/International/live-updates/russia-ukraine/?id=83390885>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/ukraine-russia-forces-battle-kyiv.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/live-blog/ukraine-russia-war-news-updates-fighting-rages-around-kyiv-russian-n1291714>

^{iv} https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2022-03-13_Ukraine%20Humanitarian%20Impact%20SitRep_final.pdf

^v https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2022-03-13_Ukraine%20Humanitarian%20Impact%20SitRep_final.pdf

^{vi} <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/02/25/ukraine-russian-cluster-munition-hits-hospital#:~:text=Human%20Rights%20Watch%20documented%20the,horrid%20weapon%2C%E2%80%9D%20Goo se%20said.>

^{vii} <https://www.politico.eu/article/nato-chief-russia-chemical-weapons-ukraine/>

^{viii} <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unaccompanied-and-separated-children-fleeing-escalating-conflict-ukraine-must-be>

Contact Information

Adib Fletcher
 Director of Humanitarian Response
 afletcher@projecthope.org
 +1 (202) 893-9701

