Conflict in Ukraine
Situation Report #11

31 March 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- To provide a comprehensive and context-specific response, Project HOPE has strategically placed Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) in Ukraine and the three largest refugee recipient countries: Moldova, Poland, and Romania.

- Depending on identified needs, ERTs are supporting conflict-affected populations on both sides of the Ukrainian border with health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), nonfood item (NFI), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities.
  - Over 4 million refugees have fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion in late February. The number displaced by the conflict could reach 10 million according to some estimates.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Heavy fighting continued across Ukraine during the reporting period. Notably, severe bombardment took place in the country’s north despite Russian’s March 29 pledge to “drastically reduce” hostilities in that part of the country while peace talks in Turkey ensue.\(^1\)

Instead, intensified attacks were recently carried out in several northern cities, including the capital, Kyiv, and its suburbs. The northern city of Chernihiv also saw an uptick in aerial assaults during this time. The city’s mayor reported that the escalation has trapped over 100,000 people. He said food and medical supplies could run out in a week’s time if the situation does not improve.\(^2\)

Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces appeared to be making significant territory gains in strategic parts of the country, including northern districts of Kyiv.\(^3\) On Wednesday, the Russian defense ministry suggested it would be diverting troops from the north to carry out objectives in the east.\(^4\)

On a call with French President Emmanuel Macron, Russian President Vladimir Putin demanded the southeastern port city of Mariupol surrender to his troops. The city has been completely surrounded by Russian forces for over a month. As a result, more than 100,000 people are believed to be trapped with little to no access to food, water, electricity, and other essentials.\(^5\)

Echoing statements made by international relief organizations and the U.S. government in recent weeks, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concern that Russia may have committed war crimes by carrying out
indiscriminate attacks in heavily populated areas and destroying civilian infrastructure, including "administrative buildings, hospitals and schools, water stations, and electricity systems."\textsuperscript{vi}

To date, the United Nations has verified 77 incidents of damage to medical facilities, including 50 hospitals, as a result of the ongoing conflict. The Commissioner also said she had received credible reports of Russian forces using internationally banned weaponry—namely cluster munitions, which often inflict disproportionate harm on civilians, sometimes years and even decades after they are deployed.\textsuperscript{vii}

As of March 30, 1,189 civilians are reported to have been killed and 1,901 injured in the ongoing crisis.\textsuperscript{viii} These estimates, however, are believed to be much lower than the actual toll because reporting continues to be limited by access constraints. Most casualties were caused by explosive weapons.\textsuperscript{ix}

The humanitarian impact of the conflict, moreover, has already impacted millions of Ukrainians. For many who remain in country, access to essential goods and services have been hindered by widespread destruction to civilian infrastructure and damage to critical supply chains.

Many civilians—including women, children, and other highly vulnerable populations—have been displaced by fighting. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that more than 4.5 million Ukrainian children have been internally displaced or forced to flee their country due to fighting.\textsuperscript{x}

**HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

More than a quarter of Ukraine's population—over 10.5 million—has been displaced since the Russian invasion began on February 24.

Of this total, more than 4 million have fled their country. Roughly half of the refugee population (2.4 million) has sought safety in Poland. Romania has received more than 600,000 and the Republic of Moldova has received almost 400,000 refugees.\textsuperscript{xi} Due to ongoing fighting, the deteriorating humanitarian situation, and sieges that are preventing hundreds of thousands from escaping, some analysts project the number of refugees could reach up to 10 million.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimates more than 12 million Ukrainians who have remained in country are in need of urgent assistance.\textsuperscript{xii} These needs are expected to increase in number and complexity as the country’s civilian infrastructure is subjected to ongoing attacks.

For example, 90 percent of hospitals and schools in the besieged city of Mariupol have been damaged in the conflict—an estimated 40 percent have been completely destroyed.\textsuperscript{xiii} Local authorities and international watchdogs have also reported extensive damage to administrative buildings, residential areas, and utility lines.

Moreover, critical supply chains and escape routes have been blocked by fighting, leaving hundreds of thousands cut off from support and in imminent danger. 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.

Those that are able to leave areas of active hostilities remain at risk for a multitude of health, mental health, and protection concerns. Relief agencies have also been closely monitoring highly vulnerable populations—including women and children—at hubs for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugee reception centers because of the significant risks of human trafficking and separations they face.

**PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE**
In response to the ongoing crisis, Project HOPE has strategically placed teams in Ukraine and the three largest refugee recipient countries: Moldova, Poland, and Romania. Project HOPE is partnering with actors on the ground—including government officials, local relief organizations, and INGOs—to provide critical relief to conflict-affected populations on both sides of Ukraine’s borders.

The multi-country effort, supported by a global team, spans health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), nonfood items (NFIs), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities. Efforts are targeted to address the most urgent needs and areas where there are known gaps in services.

In Ukraine, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Importing 47 pallets of hygiene kits, vitamins, and medical supplies in Lviv for onward distribution. These items are expected in Ukraine early next week will be delivered westward by Project HOPE’s partner in Ukraine.
- Working closely with Ministry of Health and hospital officials to assess needs and determine how best Project HOPE can fulfill gaps.

In Poland, Project HOPE’s activities include,

- Working with University Children’s Hospital (UCH) to stock a new Ukrainian children’s ward with pharmaceuticals and medical supplies. We’re also working with hospital officials to support mental health efforts at UCH’s education facilities.
- Establishing a sustainable logistics corridor into Ukraine.
- Assessing protection and mental health needs and identifying local NGOs to provide support in this sector.

In Moldova, Project HOPE’s activities include:

- Support to SAMU’s mobile medical team to serve refugees crossing the Ukraine/Moldova border at the request of WHO and the Moldovan Ministry of Health.
- Working closely with the Ministry of Health to fill worsening gaps and shortages in key pharmaceuticals due to the ongoing conflict, including the provision of insulin.
- Exploring corridors into Ukraine for pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and hygiene kits.

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 with local partners.
- Expansion of current partnerships to provide further services to refugees.

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