Conflict in Ukraine
Situation Report #13
15 April 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 4.7 million refugees have fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion in late February.
- Project HOPE’s President & CEO recently traveled within Ukraine, including visits to Kyiv and Bucha, to assess needs and meet with government officials.
- More than 7,900 doses of insulin arrived in Project HOPE’s warehouse in Lviv, Ukraine today and are now en route to Kharkiv.
- Project HOPE has imported more than 100 pallets of medicines, consumables and supplies into Ukraine for onward distribution to hospitals and health facilities identified by the Ministry of Health and local partners.
- Project HOPE Emergency Response Teams (ERT) in Romania, Moldova and Poland continue to provide services and support to refugees in coordination with local partners and authorities.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The conflict in Ukraine took an alarming turn this week after credible reports of Russian forces using chemical weapons in Mariupol flooded news outlets. Ukrainian officials allege that a “poisonous substance of unknown origin” was deployed by Russian drones over the southeastern port city. Impacted residents have displayed symptoms of respiratory failure and vestibulo-atactic syndrome.

While allegations of Russian war crimes—from the use of internationally banned weaponry to targeting of civilians—have surfaced across the country, Mariupol stands as an emblem of atrocities taking place since the incursion began on February 24. The city’s mayor declared more than 10,000 residents have died to date and warned that the death toll could soon exceed 20,000. He said countless dead bodies lie strewn across streets and that Russian troops have brought mobile cremation equipment to Mariupol to dispose of dead bodies.

Mariupol has been surrounded by Russian forces for over a month and, despite some successful humanitarian evacuations in recent days, tens of thousands are believed to be trapped with limited access to essential goods and services.

Response Updates

- ERTs in Ukraine, Poland, Romania and Moldova
- EMTs in Romania and Moldova serving refugees
- 6 hospitals in Ukraine supported with 100+ pallets of medicines and supplies including items such as:
  - 8 IEHKs
  - 45 EHPs
  - 5 TESKs
  - 7,900+ doses of insulin
  - 15,000 prenatal supplements
  - 5,000 COVID-19 tests
  - 1,280+ infant kits
  - 2,000 hygiene kits
Meanwhile, investigations of indiscriminate and targeted attacks against civilians by Russian forces continue in Bucha, a suburb of Kyiv. Videos of the town released on social media last week revealed dozens of dead bodies lying on streets shortly after Russian troops withdrew from the vicinity. Investigators have since unearthed mass graves and other evidence of sanctioned violence. Project HOPE’s President & CEO along with the ERT in Ukraine, visited Kyiv, Bucha and other conflict-affected areas this week to further assess needs at health facilities. (See updates on the trip in Ukraine Updates below).

The United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) has been tracking casualties of the Ukrainian crisis. As of April 11, OHCHR recorded 1,842 civilian deaths and 2,493 injuries—though the agency cautions actual numbers are likely much higher. Explosive ordnances were the most common cause of reported casualties.

This week, a Ukrainian rights group alleged before a United Nations assembly that Russia was using rape as a weapon of war. At the same meeting, the UN Women Executive Director said her agency was “increasingly hearing of rape and sexual violence” and that the “combination of mass displacement with large pressure results of conscripts and mercenaries and the brutality displayed against Ukrainian civilians has raised all red flags.”

As a result, women, children, older persons and other populations are at heightened risk of gender-based violence, human trafficking, and other protection concerns.

**HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

To date, over 4.7 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee ongoing hostilities in their homeland. The majority have sought refuge in bordering countries, including Poland (over 2.6 million), Romania (almost 700,000) and Moldova (over 400,000). As hostilities increase in the east and humanitarian corridors facilitate trapped populations’ escape, some estimate refugee numbers could reach 10 million.

Local facilities continue to struggle with the growing demand for medical and MHPSS needs as local infrastructure is increasingly overwhelmed with the number of refugees in need of services. In addition, the overwhelming number of women, children, older persons and other vulnerable groups among refugees means that many are at risk of human trafficking, gender-based violence (GBV), and other protection concerns.

Trends of local communities taking refugees into their homes has made tracking such needs and providing support all the more difficult. In response, UN agencies have launched “Blue Dot” hubs to provide assistance—including protection and MHPSS—to at-risk populations.

The situation is even more dire for those who remain in Ukraine. Some 6.5 million Ukrainians have been internally displaced by fighting. Another 13 million are believed to be trapped or stranded in areas of active conflict due to heavy fighting, destruction of bridges and roads, active blockades, or lack of resources or information necessary to facilitate safe transport and shelter.
PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE continues to scale up operations in Eastern Europe to respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Our teams in Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine bring technical knowledge on health, MHPSS, protection, and other sectors with considerable field experience, and a strong relationship with local and international actors to forge a targeted and comprehensive response.

As a result, Project HOPE is quickly identifying emerging gaps in areas of operation. Most recently, Project HOPE has been coordinating with UN agencies to identify where we can support Blue Dot initiatives.

Project HOPE’s current programming spans provision of pharmaceuticals, consumables, medical equipment, and technical support to health facilities treating conflict-affected populations, facilitation of MHPSS and protection services, and procurement and distribution of essential supplies, including non-food item (NFI) and hygiene kits.

**Ukraine Response Updates**

This week, Project HOPE’s President and CEO, Rabih Torbay, travelled throughout Ukraine with Project HOPE’s Country Director, including to Kyiv and Bucha, to assess needs and meet with Ministry of Health, other government officials, hospital leadership, and local authorities.

In Kyiv, Ministry of Health officials reported 22 hospitals had been destroyed and over 300 affected by the conflict. During a visit to a trauma ward at a hospital in Kyiv, doctors and nurses were treating patients with wounds from bullets, shrapnel, landmines and artillery shells. Injuries ranged from broken bones and damaged nerves to loss of limbs.

The team also visited Irpin, a city outside of Kyiv, which has suffered significant destruction by recent escalation including to civilian buildings such as high rises and single family homes. Approximately 50% of homes in Irpin have been damaged or destroyed. Project HOPE met with the director of the Irpin Central Hospital, which requested Project HOPE’s assistance to rehabilitate infrastructure damaged by artillery shelling. Two people were killed at the hospital when a shell hit. Vehicles of some of the medical staff had been riddled with bullets after being shot at by Russian soldiers within close range.

On the way to Bucha, the Project HOPE team stopped in a small town where the newborn wing of the hospital had been burned down. All patients had fortunately been evacuated; however, 4-5 health facilities had been attacked. In Bucha, the team visited the hospital there to assess needs and damages. A doctor took the team to a mass grave where he had personally buried 67 people, after bodies had been in the street for more than 10 days. More than 200 additional bodies were since added to the grave.
More about this trip can be found in an essay written by Project HOPE’s President here.

Project HOPE’s support to health facilities and IDPs in Ukraine continues to scale-up in response to the overwhelming needs. Recent and ongoing activities include:

- More than 7,900 doses of insulin reached Project HOPE’s warehouse in Lviv and are now en route to Kharkiv.
- Importation of over 100 pallets of medicine and medical supplies to date, including Interagency Emergency Health Kits (IEHKs), Essential Health Packs (EHPs), Trauma and Emergency Surgery Kits (TESKs), first aid kits, prenatal supplements, hygiene kits and infant kits. These supplies have been delivered to six hospitals across Lviv, Kyiv, Cherkasy, Poltova and Kharkiv.
- Conducting assessments of health facilities to determine gaps and needs in service delivery and availability of pharmaceuticals.

**Moldova Response Updates**

- Delivery of an Interagency Emergency Health Kit (IEHK) and mobilization of an insulin shipment to the Ministry of Health to support refugees.
- Procurement of over 300 wheelchairs to be distributed to a local organization serving Ukrainian refugees.
- Supporting SAMU’s Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) to serve refugees crossing the Ukraine/Moldova border as per the request of the WHO and Moldovan Ministry of Health. Most prevalent diagnoses have included hypertension, upper respiratory infections and acute mental health issues.
- Assessment of potential partners for Mental Health support to refugees.

**Poland Response Updates**

- Provision of a grant to University Children’s Hospital – Krakow to support their Ukrainian children’s ward.
- Procurement of key medical supplies delivered to health facilities in Lviv.
- Assessing needs and contingency planning for health facilities in Poland as refugee numbers increase demand on the Polish health system.
- Establishing Mental Health and Protection partners to support Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

**Romania Response Updates**

- Support local NGOs to provide mental health support to refugees and hygiene/shelter needs.
- Sourcing hygiene kits – including toothpaste, toothbrushes, diapers, and more – for refugees in Romania.
- Establishing key relationships to delivery supplies into Ukraine.
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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