Children in accommodation center who will benefit UNICEF-supported psychosocial intervention in Vinnytsya © UNICEF Ukraine 2014

Ukraine
Humanitarian
Situation Report #7
17 April 2014

1 The Donetsk region number of children aged 0-17. Source: Department of the Social protection of the Population, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine triangulated with UNHCR and Civic Sector data.
2 The Kharkiv region number of children aged 0-17. Source: Department of the Social protection of the Population, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine triangulated with UNHCR and Civic Sector data.
3 The Luhansk region number of children aged 0-17. Source: Department of the Social protection of the Population, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine triangulated with UNHCR and Civic Sector data.
4 These are the Eastern regions covered: Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, regions bordering with Russia. Children 0-17.

Highlights

• The political crisis deepens with violent clashes, deaths and injuries reported in Eastern Ukraine. The situation is extremely tense in the eastern part of the Donetsk oblast, especially in Slavyansk city.
• UNICEF completes a rapid assessment on the impact of the situation on children in Eastern Ukraine.
• UNICEF deploys three field monitors to the cities of Kharkiv, Lviv and Kherson.
• UNICEF signs an agreement with the NGO to provide psychosocial support to IDP children and women in Vinnitsia and Ladyzhin cities.
• As of 15 April, 5,000 IDPs have fled Crimea to Lviv, Kyiv, Vinnytsya, Khmelnitskiy, Ivano-Frankivsk and to other 20 cities.
• The Parliament of Ukraine has adopted a law “On protection of the rights and freedoms on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine” (Crimea)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donetsk region</td>
<td>662,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kharkiv region</td>
<td>416,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luhansk region</td>
<td>334,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern regions</td>
<td>1,413,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimea</td>
<td>344,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Overview

As the political crisis in Eastern Ukraine worsens, its impact on children and families is now beginning to be felt, particularly among the most vulnerable. Unrest is mainly focussed in Donetsk oblast, especially in Slavyansk city where armed pro-Russian activists still occupy the police station and a building housing the Ukrainian Security Service. In addition the Donetsk regional administration building remains under the control of pro-Russian activists as it is in nearby Luhansk Oblast. Troops have been deployed in the north of Donetsk region to restore order. The situation in Crimea remains quiet and tense with very limited access.

The first significant signs of disruption to daily life, and for children are now being felt. Public life has been negatively impacted in a number of areas of the Donetsk region. The centre of many cities are sites of the conflict. Travel by road in some areas is interrupted by checkpoints. Children’s access to education has been impacted in Slavyansk city where all schools and kindergartens have been closed by the authorities. Children have been reported to be accompanying parents involved in the demonstrations.

In other developments, Ukraine’s Parliament has adopted a law which defines Crimea as temporarily occupied and which regulates the entry and exit of Crimean citizen from the Crimean peninsula to mainland Ukraine. The Acting President, Turchinov signed into law provisions "On urgent measures to deal with the terrorist threat and the territorial integrity of Ukraine". The details of the decree were not revealed to the public. On 15 April UNOHCHR released a report on the human rights situation in Ukraine drawing parallels between events in Crimea and events currently unfolding in eastern Ukraine.

Humanitarian Needs

As of 15 April, according to UNHCR approximately 5,000 IDPs have fled Crimea. The majority are located in Lviv (1,157), Kyiv (930), Vinnytsya (373), KhmelNitskiy (275), and Ivano-Frankivsk (207). UNICEF staff together with UNHCR visited three IDPs accommodation facilities in Brovary and Puscha Voditsya, Kyiv oblast on April 7. The living conditions in all three sites are satisfactory. Food is provided by individual volunteers as well as NGOs. Displaced persons have access to the local health facilities. The mission noted that children are warmly welcomed by local communities and are given books and other school supplies by volunteers. IDPs children attend a school that is located 3.5 km from the accommodation centre. The overall psychological condition of IDPs is good due to the work of psychologists who visit the accommodation centres every day as well as good living conditions and welcoming community.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

On 15 April the UN inter-agency technical working group met to share information on the country-wide situation and coordinate upcoming joint assessments. It was decided to update the current UN Contingency Plan in light of recent developments in eastern Ukraine. UNICEF joined with WHO to advocate among other agencies and stakeholders on the importance of psychosocial support to children. Following UNICEF’s advice, UN agencies agreed to include the Ukraine State Sanitary Epidemiological Service in health sector meetings, chaired by the WHO. This is following assessments which have identified challenges concerning hygiene behavior and the hygiene situation generally at the IDP reception centers and also because of the lack of partners in WASH sector. OSCE is continuing its monitoring mission in nine regions of Ukraine. The estimated time for the mission is 6 months.
Summary Analysis of Programme response

UNICEF’s main role remains close monitoring of how the political crisis impacts the wellbeing of children, with particular attention to Eastern Ukraine. The programme team this week concluded a rapid assessment of the situation by telephone interviewing civil society partners, officials and other counterparts in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Makeyevka, and Gorlovka.

The assessment revealed:

• No evidence that children, adolescents and young people are systematically engaged in the demonstrations.
• There have been no reports on children arrested or detained in the recent events.
• Counterparts have reported that some families in difficult financial circumstances have been drawn into demonstrations through financial incentives and cases were reported in which protesters took their underage children to protests and gatherings.
• There were cases of working parents leaving their children alone at home during periods of volatility or street-clashes.
• Partners observed clashes between pro-Russian protesters and young people particularly pro-European university students.
• Partners have reported of urgent need to provide social care and support to children who were affected by the events or have witnessed violence in the streets.
• Children’s access to education has not been significantly affected in the majority of locations, except for Slavyansk city where all schools and kindergartens have been closed by the authorities as of 14 April. The safety of children is a priority for local authorities.
• No specific interruption to the extracurricular activities has been reported.

The current situation is having a significant psychosocial impact on children and their parents. In Kharkiv, demonstrations have occurred in public and recreational places traditionally frequented by children and parents. Anxiety, uncertainty and concern about a potential conflict or war is adding to the stress.

Concern was expressed to UNICEF that care givers have a low level of understanding of potential dangers of street protests to the wellbeing of children. Partners in Gorlovka noted a possible security threat to adolescents as they believe some adolescents may be actively involved in armed groups. A lack of coordinated psychosocial support to children or families was reported and a need for action to address this has been reported.

In addition to the rapid telephone assessment, UNICEF Child Protection Officer undertook a field visit to Kharkiv on 9-11 April following several days of violent clashes. This mission reported:

• No minors were detained among 70 arrested people during the protests in the city during the week of 6 April.
• OSCE reported to the mission that during the protests women and children were encouraged to participate by the organizers to serve as “live barriers” to inhibit shooting. This issue is being currently further examined in order to allow UNICEF to intervene with the responsible organizers.
• The need for psychosocial support is vital in Eastern oblasts as divisions are deepening among school students according to pro-Russian or pro-Ukrainian leanings and there is a reported increased level of tolerance to violence amongst the general population.
UNICEF signed contracts with three individuals to serve as field monitors in Kharkiv, Lviv and Kherson to continue monitoring the situation in Eastern, Western and Southern parts of Ukraine. UNICEF signed a small scale funding agreement with Vinnytsya based NGO “Dzherolo nadiyi” to provide psycho-social support to IDP children located in Vinnitsia and Ladyzhin. Approximately 100 children will benefit from this intervention as well as tens of women and family members in these communities. The agreement with Lviv partner NGO “Caritas Ukraine” is being finalized and is scheduled for signature in the week of April 22.

Supply and Logistics

UNICEF obtained pricing information on family kits as well as ECD kits for procurement and distribution in the week of April 28. All planned, 800 basic hygiene kits have been distributed to regions while keeping 200 kits in stock in Kyiv.

Based on a preliminary request from the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF is exploring the availability of OPV, DTaP and DTaPHibIPV vaccines through Supply Division for a possible government procurement. UNICEF is also monitoring the available vaccine stocks in the country and is prepared to provide technical assistance to the MoH on improving its vaccine procurement system.

Next SitRep: 2 May 2014

Who to contact for further information:

Ruediger Luchmann, OIC Representative, e-mail: rluchmann@unicef.org
Veronika Vashchenko, Communication Officer, e-mail: vvashchenko@unicef.org

UNICEF Ukraine
5 Klovsky Uzviz, 01021 Kyiv, Ukraine
Tel: (+380-44) 5210125, 254 2439
Fax: (+380-44) 230 2506
Web: www.unicef.org.ua

Facebook: www.facebook.com/unicef.ukraine, Twitter: @unicef_ua