Highlights

State Emergency Service (SES) reports the total number of internally displaced persons at 417,246 as of 17 October. At least one third of them are children.

Ministry of Education (MoES) estimates that around 60% of schools in conflict affected areas opened on 1 October. UNICEF monitors report that at least 57 schools out of 169 in Donetsk city are not operational due to continued shelling.

During the month of September 2,225 calls were made to the UNICEF supported hotline for women and children. Since January, a total of 12,495 calls were received – 26 per cent made by children seeking information about psychosocial help.

In the period 3-15 October, 2014 UNICEF distributed 316 baby hygiene kits, 469 adult hygiene kits, 40 early childhood development (ECD) kits to the areas of active fighting in Donetsk city, as well as Zaporizhzhia and Kyiv regions supporting 632 children and 938 adults.

Ukrainian Center for Disease Control (UCDC) reports gaps in access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) and diagnostic test kits. UCDC estimated that ART is needed for 3,200 children and 106,000 test-systems are needed for pregnant women.

| # of children in Donetsk region | 662 245 |
| # of children in Kharkiv region | 416 442 |
| # of children in Luhansk region | 334 455 |
| Total # of children in the Eastern regions | 1 413 142 |
| # of children in Crimea | 344 263 |

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1The 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.
2The 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.
3The 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.
4These are the Eastern regions covered: Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, regions bordering with Russia. Children 0-17.
Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The safety and security in eastern Ukraine continues to be of prime concern for the humanitarian community. Ongoing ceasefire violations are reported on a daily basis, shelling is reported to have intensified in Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the coming winter will result in additional needs, for which adequate planning is crucial. The government controlled parts of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts are getting increasingly accessible for humanitarian missions. However, the access to non-governmental controlled areas remains problematic, making it difficult to deliver much needed humanitarian aid.

Internal displacement continues, and the affected population remains much vulnerable and in need of support. State Emergency Service (SES) reports that 417,246 people have been internally displaced in Ukraine as of 17 October. At least one third of them are children.

On 4 October, two children were killed and five wounded as a result of an UXO explosion within Zurhes town, Donetsk oblast, a non-governmental controlled area.

Damage to infrastructure, insecurity and lack of access continues to affect children’s schooling. On 1 October, the new school year was scheduled to start in areas of on-going fighting. However, the Ministry of Education (MoES) estimates that only 60% of schools opened. The safety of the children attending these schools in non-governmental controlled areas remains a big concern. To address it, the MoES encourages individual (home-based) schooling and distance-learning courses for children in the conflict zone through the Ministry web-site.

In Donetsk City, UNICEF monitors report that at least 57 schools out of 169 are not operational due to continued shelling, four schools are completely ruined and school attendance is estimated at about 55% of children.

Within the area controlled by the government in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, around 100 educational facilities remain partially or completely damaged. 70,000 internally displaced children continue to attend schools in the areas of their displacement. However, in some rural areas, access to educational facilities for IDP children has been restricted due to lack of school buses.

The MoES reports that there is a sufficient number of teachers available to meet the increased demand from enrolled children who have been displaced. The MoES has requested additional funding from the Ministry of Finance, warning of potential payroll difficulties.

The school calendar for children in Ukraine has been re-modeled to allow schools to close for two months during the winter to save on heating expenses. Children in Ukraine have started a six day schooling schedule per week in October and the fall break has been cancelled. The extended two-month winter vacation can be expected to pose a challenge for working parents.

In Sevastopol (Crimea), local authorities agreed to provide school graduates with academic achievement certificates for both - Ukraine and Russia. This will facilitate graduates’ entry into universities in Ukraine, if they wish to do so. The practice will not be operationalized throughout the Crimean peninsula.

Children’s wellbeing and mental health continues to be at risk as a consequence of the ongoing violence, an issue that will become more critical as winter sets in. Further, the issue of UXO and the need for mine risk education in the affected areas remain crucial. The UNICEF’s Mine Risk Education (MRE) undertake is being scaled up.

The UNICEF-led Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) has identified additional constraints in the access to services for displaced children. In particular, access to schools is sometimes hampered either due to parent’s own will or due to marginalization as IDP. In some cases, medical records have been left behind in the areas of ongoing fighting, causing additional difficulty in monitoring the health of children with special needs and chronic illness.

Child protection agencies report that parents are becoming increasingly anxious about the winter as they lack means for coping, such as winter clothing and shoes for their children, fuel and proper accommodation. UNICEF is monitoring this issue of winterization and is advocating across other sectors such as NFI (non-food items), Shelter, Food Sector Coordination groups for the specific needs of children and families.

According to UNICEF monitors, the majority of displaced children arriving in Kharkiv from the areas of ongoing fighting are displaying various symptoms of distress. Many of these children have witnessed violence. The lack of school psychologists

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6At least 30 educational institutions are damaged in the city of Horlovka

UNICEF Canada CEO David Morley visits the accommodation centre in Velyka Dymerkato talk to children and caregivers who have received support from UNICEF Ukraine.
and their inability to cope with the number of children affected by stress, poses a significant challenge to psychosocial support. UNICEF is establishing a capacity-building programme for school psychologists to identify and respond to children’s heightened stress.

Many Ukrainian children continue to suffer from disrupted water and sanitation systems and a lack of basic hygiene. Shelling damaged “Prikanalnaya” and “Gorlovskaya” water filter stations. The water supply in Kirov pumping station is only operational during the day, limiting water supply by 50 per cent to the city’s population, and residents of Shahtersk city receive less than 30 per cent of their needs. The situation with water supply in Torez remains unchanged with slightly more than 20% of the required amount of water available. UNICEF continues to monitor the situation, while the operational access is limited.

Piped drinking water is unavailable in Avdeyevka, Yasinovataya, Krasnogorovka and nearby villages. Local authorities are not able to start restoration of Donetsk filtration station until the cessation of hostilities in Avdeyevka and Yasinovataya areas. Residents in Amvrosiivka, Novoazovsk, Telmanovo, Starobeshevo, Mariupol as well as Slaviansk, Druzhkivka, Kramatorskaya, Konstantinovka, Snezhnoe, Dzerzhinsk and Khartsyzhsk have access to sufficient amounts of water. UNICEF WASH Specialist is preparing an assessment mission to this area to plan for UNICEF’s response.

Ukrainian Center for Disease Control (UCDC) reports gaps in access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) and diagnostic test kits. UCDC estimates that ART is needed for 3,200 children and 106,000 test-systems are needed for pregnant women. There are difficulties in delivering ART to Donetsk and Luhansk cities. UNICEF is a part of inter-agency group planning the response to bridge the gap.

**Interagency Coordination and Partnerships**

The Post-Crisis Needs Assessment scoping mission was carried out in Ukraine with the participation of a UNICEF expert within the UNDG team. As a result, UN agencies are planning together with the government of Ukraine a first phase of the PCNA scheduled for the 1st week of November. At country level UNICEF is advocating for the inclusion of social services.

The inter-sectoral Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) is planned by OCHA with the participation of sector leads, including UNICEF WASH and Child Protection. The monitoring methodology and the questionnaire have been finalised. The HSM priority areas are Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv oblasts. The data collection will start on 21 October and the report is expected at the end of October. The findings from the monitoring report will be used for the identification of needs and information gaps as well as prioritization of the humanitarian response activities.

UNICEF field monitors in Donetsk city have established a partnership with an NGO ‘Mig’ and a network of volunteers, technical staff of Donetsk National University to ensure effective distribution of UNICEF hygiene supplies to most vulnerable groups of the affected population.

In the course of last week, UNICEF Ukraine country office has signed Memorandums of Understanding with NGOs, which operate in the areas of ongoing fighting: ‘YMCA’, ‘Common Sense’, ‘Mama 86’, ‘UkrainskiRubezh’ and HORS.

UNICEF monitors participated in the forum of NGOs in Sloviansk, Donetsk region where they were able to reach agreements with some organisations on the distribution of UNICEF hygiene kits.

**Summary Programme Response**

**Education**

UNICEF welcomes the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Policy agreement to ensure that ‘children’s rights to education in emergency’ will be included in the “National Action Plan on the implementation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child”. This agreement is due to UNICEF’s and the Ukraine Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights’ advocacy work on the issue.

The UNICEF Education and Child Protection teams are working with their government counterparts and sector members to revise the preliminary planning and emergency response with the support of CEECIS RO Emergency Education expert.
Mine Risk Education (MRE) materials have been disseminated to 1,644 preschool and school educational facilities in Donbass covering ten out of 18 rayons in Donetsk oblast and 12 out of 18 rayons of Luhansk oblast. As distribution in non-governmental controlled areas remains challenging, UNICEF is working with partners on the ground to identify ways to disseminate materials, including distribution in the non-food items (NFI) kits. UNICEF managed to mobilise additional funding for the second phase of the MRE programme including such components as capacity building of teachers and caregivers, behaviour change interventions among children and young people.

**WASH**

After long negotiations and continuous search for local partners, UNICEF managed to deliver over 500 hygiene and family kits to the city of Donetsk. Having received financial support from ECHO, UNICEF has launched the procurement of additional 1,200 adult hygiene kits, 680 family hygiene kits and 1,200 baby hygiene kits, which will benefit over 6,000 children and families.

UNICEF has brokered the delivery of five tons of water to schools benefiting approximately 10,000 in Luhansk in collaboration with the Agency for Sustainable Development of Luhansk.

**Child Protection**

UNICEF work to reduce the psychological impact of conflict on women and children continues to increase. UNICEF supported psychosocial training by American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee & Kyiv-Mohyla Academy for Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and NGO. Experts will be participating in UNICEF’s psychosocial project with Kyiv-Mohyla, which is expected to benefit IDP children by the end of October.

In the last two weeks, 100 persons (80 children) have received individual and group counselling addressing children’s stress levels, enhancing communication skills and reducing anxiety and fears. In the last month, 83 social workers and teachers have benefited from presentations about how to better meet IDP children’s needs.

The UNICEF supported hotline for children and families, has received 12,495 calls since January. During the month of September a monthly record 2,225 calls were received by NGO LaStrada managing this hotline. Approximately 26 per cent of calls are made by children seeking information on psychosocial help. About 10 per cent of children enquire about their rights, and 6 per cent are worried about relationships within their family. About 5 per cent of calls include questions about violence. Most of the calls come from Lviv, Kyiv and Kharkiv regions.

**Health**

The ongoing displacement of children and families in Ukraine added to the fact that barely 50 per cent of Ukrainian children have been vaccinated against polio, means that the spread of communicable disease is a possible risk. UNICEF together with the Ministry of Health is rolling out a nation wide communication campaign for mothers on the risks of a polio outbreak in country. UNICEF continues negotiations on the procurement of the much needed polio vaccines to the country.

**Supplies**

In the period 3-15 October 2014 UNICEF distributed 316 baby hygiene kits, 469 adult hygiene kits, 40 early childhood development (ECD) kits to the areas of active fighting in Donetsk city, as well as Zaporizhzhia and Kyiv regions supporting 632 children and 938 adults. UNICEF has also purchased 120 educational kits and is procuring 700 school bags, which will be distributed to children in the conflict areas and in the areas of displacement in the following weeks.

**Next SitRep: 31 October 2014**

**Who to contact for further information:**

**Giovanna Barberis**, Representative, e-mail: gbarberis@unicef.org

**Veronika Vashchenko**, Communication Officer, e-mail: vwashchenko@unicef.org

UNICEF Ukraine, 5 KlovskyUzviz, 01021 Kyiv, Ukraine
Tel: (+ 380-44) 5210125, 254 2439
Web: [www.unicef.org.ua](http://www.unicef.org.ua), Facebook: [www.facebook.com/unicef.ukraine](http://www.facebook.com/unicef.ukraine), Twitter: @unicef_ua

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