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for every child

Humanitarian Action for Children

Seven-year-old Vika lives in Avdiivka near the 'contact line' in eastern Ukraine. She received a UNICEF backpack full of educational supplies to help her go to school for the very first time.

Ukraine

HIGHLIGHTS¹

- The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine enters its eighth year and continues to take a heavy toll on civilians: ceasefire violations significantly intensified damaging homes, schools, water facilities and social infrastructure. Mine contamination remains a major source of threat to the life and safety of children. Limited access to basic services continues to threaten the mental and physical well-being of children. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose serious challenges for healthcare services and to increase child poverty.
- In 2022, UNICEF will continue to safeguard children's rights to safety, health, education, psychosocial support, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and address the needs of over 780,000² people. The response will address the impact of the armed conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- UNICEF requires US\$15.1³ million to provide access to basic services including WASH, immunization and health care, schooling and learning, psychosocial support and emergency cash assistance for children and families.

IN NEED
3.4 million people⁴
510,000 children⁵

2018 2022

TO BE REACHED
780,000 people⁶
117,000 children⁷

2018 2022

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS
US\$ 15.1 million

2018 2022

KEY PLANNED TARGETS



780,000

people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water



25,000

women and children accessing gender-based violence mitigation, prevention, response



10,000

households reached with UNICEF funded multi-purpose humanitarian cash transfers



50,000

people engaged in risk communication and community engagement actions

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Ukraine continues to face the unprecedented dual challenge of coping with the effects of an eight-year armed conflict in the east and the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸ Despite efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict, the situation remains difficult for the 3.4 million people,⁹ including 510,000 children,¹⁰ living in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In this context of protracted conflict, civilians bear the brunt of the crisis. Water and education infrastructure is frequently targeted, threatening children's access to safe water and schooling. Particularly in the non-government-controlled areas, access to learning is imperilled by weak teaching capacities and run-down infrastructure. Children and their families require continuous psychosocial support and protection services, including addressing gender-based violence (GBV)¹¹ and assistance for victims of accidents related to explosive remnants of war, as well as mine risk education. Access to quality health services, especially for the most vulnerable, remains a daily challenge, exacerbated by the exodus of specialists.

In one of the world's most mine-contaminated areas, the risk of stepping on a landmine remains a stark reality.¹² Due to the conflict-related incidents in 2021, four children were killed, and four children and 13 women were injured.

The health system, including emergency medical services, which was already weak, has continued to be severely challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite efforts by the Government and partners, there remains low awareness among medical professionals. Pervasive vaccine hesitancy led Ukraine to record one of the lowest COVID-19 vaccination rates in Eastern Europe despite the surplus of vaccine supplies.¹³ Slow vaccination rates and relaxed quarantine measures have led to two big waves of exponential growth in new confirmed cases.¹⁴

Despite robust progress in recent years, Ukraine experiences low child immunization rates, putting a large cohort of children at additional risk.¹⁵ Over 270,000 children under 5 years of age and their mothers need critical health support, including immunization.¹⁶

As of September 2021, following lockdown decisions in eastern Ukraine, some 140,000 children were affected by school closures.¹⁷ While a distance education programme has been launched, many vulnerable children have been excluded due to limited connectivity and lack of information technology.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit vulnerable groups particularly hard and exacerbated pre-existing inequalities. According to a recent study, child poverty in Ukraine has increased to 65.7 per cent in the Donetsk Oblast.¹⁸ Children and adolescents with HIV/AIDS in the conflict area continue to face serious challenges in accessing quality care and support.

SECTOR NEEDS



195,000

children in need of quality life-saving services¹⁹



1.7 million

people lack access to safe water²⁰



290,000

children need protection services²¹



10,000

people in need of income support²²



250,000

children need education support²³

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Vika turned seven years old in September, her seventh birthday since the conflict broke out in eastern Ukraine.

As the conflict in eastern Ukraine reaches the seven-year mark, one young girl prepares to go to school for the first time. In September, Vika turned seven years old – her seventh birthday since the conflict broke out in eastern Ukraine.

“Mom, do you hear the shooting again?” she asks her mother, Anna.

“Yes. It’s just like Winnie the Pooh,” Anna replies. “Boo! Are you scared?”

“No,” says Vika. “Because you are next to me!”

This is the only life she has ever known – one filled with shooting, landmines and explosions.

[Read more about this story here](#)

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

In 2022, UNICEF's strategy in Ukraine will continue to focus on protecting children and realizing child rights on both sides of the contact line, in government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk, while responding to the vulnerabilities caused by the dual crises of conflict and COVID-19.²⁶

To respond to the urgent needs of 780,000 people and children, UNICEF will strengthen social services and child protection, psychosocial support; and health, education and WASH services. The capacities of local professionals, authorities and civil society actors will be enhanced to strengthen preparedness and accountability to affected children, in line with the Grand Bargain commitments.²⁷

UNICEF will improve access to quality, inclusive, age- and gender-sensitive social services to increase families' resilience to protection-related risks. UNICEF will work with humanitarian partners to target the most vulnerable, while also strengthening education, social welfare, health and other community-based services. As the lead agency for the WASH cluster and the child protection sub-cluster, UNICEF will continue to advocate with parties to the conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and child rights standards. This includes advocacy and technical support to the Government to implement the national action plan of the Safe Schools Declaration.²⁸

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted safe access to all services, including immunization and primary health care, schools and social care institutions, necessitating specific protective measures for institutions and professionals. To address this, UNICEF will continue to strengthen the capacities of the local authorities and service provision facilities in infection prevention and control to ensure a safe environment at the facility level.

To reduce the transmission of COVID-19, UNICEF will continue risk communication activities to raise awareness and increase knowledge on COVID-19 prevention measures through multimedia channels and community outreach activities, targeting care providers, parents/caregivers and the public. UNICEF and its partners will also increase access to hygiene supplies and drinking water.

UNICEF will engage with pre-school and school-aged children with edutainment activities for healthy practices on nutrition, hygiene and social skills development. Advocacy will be conducted at the national and local levels, including in government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas to facilitate the provision of essential and quality services for children and women.

UNICEF will continue supporting community-level services and GBV services while increasing advocacy to strengthen public services. These actions will directly contribute to improving linkages between humanitarian action and development programmes in order to support durable solutions.

In response to the notable increase in child poverty rates in Ukraine, UNICEF will introduce an emergency cash assistance programme supporting the most vulnerable children.

Progress against the latest programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/ukraine/situation-reports>

This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

2022 PROGRAMME TARGETS²⁹



Health³⁰

- **40,000** health care facility staff and community health workers trained in infection prevention and control
- **50,000** mothers and children under 5 years benefiting from direct health service provision
- **20,000** health care providers trained on detection, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **780,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking and domestic needs
- **145,000** people reached with critical WASH supplies³¹
- **24,500** people provided with improved access to appropriate sanitation



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **20,000** children and parents/caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support
- **25,000** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- **40,000** children accessing explosive weapons-related risk education and survivor assistance interventions



Education

- **300** schools implementing safe school protocols (infection prevention and control)
- **18,500** girls and boys benefiting from education and early learning supplies and rehabilitated inclusive schools and kindergartens
- **8,000** girls and boys benefiting from conflict-sensitive, risk-informed and life skills-based education delivered by trained teachers



Social protection

- **10,000** households reached with UNICEF funded multi-purpose humanitarian cash transfers



HIV and AIDS

- **600** children affected by HIV provided with continuous care and support services



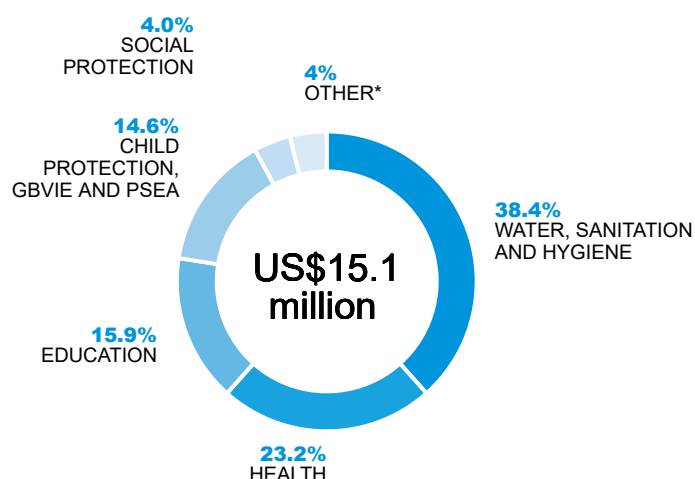
Cross-sectoral (HCT, C4D, RCCE and AAP)

- **50,000** people engaged in risk communication and community engagement actions

Programme targets are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency planning documents.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2022

UNICEF requires US\$15.1 million³² to meet the humanitarian needs of children, adolescents, women and families affected by the double crises of the armed conflict and COVID-19 pandemic and provide critical services for affected populations in eastern Ukraine. The 2022 funding ask for eastern Ukraine has slightly increased, as UNICEF intends to introduce an emergency cash assistance programme in response to significantly high levels of child poverty and to support the shock-responsive social protection system. The funding appeal will also enable UNICEF to build the capacities of the health system to better respond to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and implement critical WASH interventions to address gaps in hygiene and infection control. UNICEF will continue supporting immunization coverage in the non-government-controlled areas, expand education coverage and increase access to social services for vulnerable families and their children, including mental health and psychosocial support, gender-based violence services and services for children with disabilities. The appeal for health includes additional funding needed to support awareness-raising activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF's appeal requirement is aligned with Ukraine's 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan. Without sufficient and timely funding, UNICEF will be unable to support the response to the country's continuous crisis.



Sector	2022 requirements (US\$)
Health	3,500,000 ³³
Water, sanitation and hygiene	5,800,000
Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	2,200,000
Education	2,400,000
Social protection	600,000
HIV and AIDS	400,000
Cross-sectoral (HCT, C4D, RCCE and AAP)	200,000
Total	15,100,000

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : HIV and AIDS (2.6%), Cross-sectoral (HCT, C4D, RCCE and AAP) (1.3%).

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ENDNOTES

1. UNICEF's public health and socio-economic COVID-19 response, including programme targets and funding requirements, is integrated into the standalone country, multi-country and regional Humanitarian Action for Children appeals. All interventions related to accelerating equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines fall under the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) global appeal.
2. Figure is based on the central customer data-base of the Voda Donbasu water utility company. It indicates the estimated number of people in eastern Ukraine who access drinking water from the central distribution network of the company, which receives critical support from UNICEF interventions, such as water treatment chemicals.
3. This funding appeal is for the humanitarian response programme targeting the conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic in eastern Ukraine only. UNICEF's COVID-19 funding appeal for the rest of Ukraine is included in its regional COVID-19 appeal for Europe and Central Asia.
4. An estimated 3 million residents and 353,000 internally displaced persons are in the area directly affected by the armed conflict. Of these, 1.7 million live in government-controlled areas and nearly 1.7 million live in non-government-controlled areas. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan', OCHA, 2020.
5. While the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan estimates that 510,000 children living in conflict-affected areas are in need (15 per cent of the 3.4 million) a smaller number of children in need live in communities within 0 to 20 kilometres of the Line of Contact in government-controlled areas and non-government-controlled areas. These children are prioritized in the UNICEF response. 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan'.
6. The Government of Ukraine is better prepared compared to 2021 and has allocated more funding for infection prevention and control supplies in the country. In view of this, UNICEF revised its overall target in the government-controlled areas. The figure is calculated based on the highest coverage programme target for WASH. Women/girls represent 54 per cent (421,200) and men/boys represent 46 per cent (358,800). An estimated 15 per cent of the population have a disability, according to Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview', OCHA, 2020. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children; and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.
7. This was calculated using 15 per cent of the highest coverage programme target for WASH. This includes 48 per cent of girls (56,160) and 52 per cent of boys (60,840). It is important to note that population statistics remain highly problematic in the area and UNICEF uses various estimates to calculate figures on children. As UNICEF focuses on groups that are most vulnerable, there is a slight decrease in the number of children to be reached, compared to 2021. An estimated 15 per cent of the child population has a disability, so an estimated 17,550 children with disabilities will be reached.
8. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (Revised Requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic)', OCHA, December 2020.
9. An estimated 3 million residents and 353,000 internally displaced persons are in the area directly affected by the armed conflict. Of these, 1.7 million live in government-controlled areas and nearly 1.7 million live in non-government-controlled areas. 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.
10. This is the estimated number of children living in conflict-affected regions (both government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas) who are directly and indirectly impacted by the armed conflict and its consequences. Of these, 430,000 children live in communities within 0 to 20 kilometres of the Line of Contact in government-controlled areas and non-government-controlled areas that will be targeted by UNICEF, while the rest of the children live in the larger conflict area. 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan'; and 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.
11. The levels of violence against boys, girls and women were already high in Ukraine prior to the conflict and, unfortunately, its protracted nature resulted in its' normalization. Along the contact line, domestic violence, abuse at home, as well as neglect of children have become more prevalent and more violent and in severe forms compared to the beginning of the conflict, as reported by child protection partners and the gender-based violence (GBV) mobile teams providing case management services. In 2021, more than 26,500 survivors of GBV/domestic violence, including 4,800 children received psychosocial services through online consultations and emergency outreach in eastern Ukraine.
12. Ukraine Protection Cluster, 'Mine Action in Ukraine', March 2019.
13. As of 3 October 2021, little more than 5 million people have been vaccinated against COVID-19, out of an estimated population of 41 million. This is despite Ukraine launching its vaccination campaign in March 2021. <https://vaccination.covid19.gov.ua/>
14. As of 3 October 2021, Ukraine officially reported over 2,445,000 cases and over 56,770 deaths due to COVID-19. Starting early September, there is another wave of the pandemic in the country. Ukraine National Health Service. <https://phc.org.ua/kontrol-zakhvoryuvan/inshi-infekciyni-zakhvoryuvannya/koronavirusna-infekciya-covid-19>
15. Low immunization in Ukraine was initially caused by lack of vaccines in 2009-2015 along with vaccine hesitancy due to lack of trust in evidence-based medicine. In 2016, fewer than 50 per cent of children were vaccinated against measles according to the vaccination calendar. In 2017, the vaccination coverage increased. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted routine immunization, per the October 2021 UNICEF Knowledge Attitude and Practice survey: among 1,200 women with children under six years, the number of respondents willing to vaccinate their child according to the national immunization schedule decreased from 88 per cent in 2019 to 77 per cent in 2020. Although by the second half of 2020, access to vaccination services was largely restored from the levels of the late 2000s, and by the end of 2020 routine vaccination rates in children in Ukraine looked fair, certain concerns remain. For example, the coverage of the measles vaccine in 2020 dropped to just over 83 per cent compared to 93.2 per cent in 2019.
16. UNICEF estimate based on 'Ukraine: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview' and State Statistics Department data.
17. Ukraine Education Cluster, 2021.
18. The pandemic increased vulnerabilities, in particular for families with children, reducing their income level and diminishing the coping strategies. As a result, children face barriers in accessing basic services and support. The Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are reported facing a high level of child poverty (65.7 and 57.7 per cent vs national average of 47.3 per cent). Report on Child Poverty and Disparities in Ukraine. UNICEF, 2021.
19. Some 195,000 children are living in conflict-affected areas that need health services. 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan'. UNICEF's geographic focus is smaller than the Humanitarian Response Plan and will target communities within 0 to 20 kilometres of the Line of Contact in government-controlled areas and some parts of the non-government-controlled areas.
20. Some 1.9 million people living in conflict-affected areas lack access to safe water as per 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan'. UNICEF's geographic focus is smaller than the Humanitarian Response Plan and will target communities within 0 to 20 kilometres of the Line of Contact in government-controlled areas and some areas in the non-government-controlled areas.
21. This includes mental health and psychosocial support services. 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.
22. Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are reported facing high levels of child poverty (65.7 and 57.7 per cent vs national average of 47.3 per cent). This number derives from UNICEF estimation based on the recent child poverty study.
23. Some 102,900 children living in conflict-affected areas need education support as per 'Ukraine: 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan'. UNICEF's geographic focus is smaller than the HRP and will target some communities within 0 to 20 kilometres of the Line of Contact in government-controlled areas and non-government-controlled areas.
24. Despite the endorsement of the national Law on Domestic Violence, Government professionals still struggle with understanding and applying newly introduced legislative norms. The GBV service providers report various challenges in ensuring timely and quality assistance to survivors of GBV and to cases of violence against children, including the lack of shelters for survivors, the lack of qualified specialists, especially psychologists, and resources for rapid response. So far, the services available are those provided by humanitarian community that are often time-bound and donor driven.
25. UNICEF leads cluster coordination for the WASH, nutrition and education clusters and the child protection area of responsibility.
26. UNICEF leads cluster coordination for WASH, co-leads the education cluster and leads the child protection sub-cluster area of responsibility .
27. The Grand Bargain is a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations, who have committed to getting more means into the hands of people in need and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.
28. The Safe Schools Declaration is an inter-governmental political agreement that outlines a set of commitments to strengthen the protection of education from attack and restrict the use of schools and universities for military purposes. It seeks to ensure the continuity of safe education during armed conflict. Ukraine signed the Declaration in November 2019 and developed a National Plan of Action with UNICEF support. Advocacy efforts are needed to advance the implementation of the Plan.
29. For some programme targets, there is a slight change, decrease or increase; these changes were made after careful review of the needs and adjustments to the COVID-19 related response one year on from the start of the pandemic. In other areas, UNICEF will increasingly focus on the needs in non-government-controlled areas, such as in education.
30. The HRP 2021 did not include nutrition as a target programme area, because the assessments did not identify this as a humanitarian need. A small-scale need has been identified for nutritional education, which UNICEF is not covering and therefore not including as a programmatic target.
31. While there is increased financing from the Government to institutions responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an increased vulnerability among households in accessing WASH supplies, in particular hygiene supplies.
32. This funding appeal is for the humanitarian response programme targeting the armed conflict and COVID-19 pandemic in eastern Ukraine only. UNICEF's COVID-19 funding appeal for the rest of Ukraine is included in its regional COVID-19 appeal for Europe and Central Asia.
33. This includes US\$500 thousand to support UNICEF's risk communication activities to raise awareness and increase knowledge on COVID-19 prevention measures through multimedia channels and community outreach activities, targeting care providers, parents/caregivers and the public.