HEALTH CLUSTER Ukraine
BULLETIN # 7
May-June 2020

Ukraine

Emergency type: Protracted Emergency
Reporting period: May-June, 2020

2020 HRP Overview

1.3 million people the Health Cluster aims to assist in 2020

21 projects approved for 2020 HRP

17,160 people benefited from healthcare services in 2020

USD 22,4 million funds requested

USD 3.6 million funds received (16.2% of requested)

2020 COVID-19 HRP Overview

400,000 people the Health Cluster aims to assist (in addition to 1.3 m) in 2020

822,445 people benefited from COVID-related assistance in 2020

USD 16,6 million additional funds requested

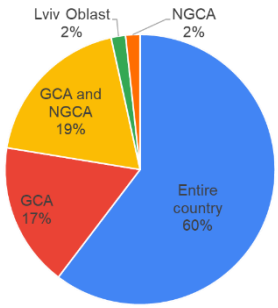
USD 1.9 million funds received (11.6% of requested)

More information available in the Ukraine: 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) - Revised Requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Health Cluster 2020

Health Cluster Partners: 58

- International NGOs: 17
- Government/foreign embassies: 8
- International organizations: 8
- National NGOs: 8
- International donors: 7
- United Nations agencies: 7
- Representatives of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: 3



More information available in the Health Cluster Partners Survey Results – May, 2020

COVID-19 situation overview

Epidemiological situation in ECA

In Government-Controlled area (GCA) numbers are relatively low despite the increase in the number of tests performed. According to the Public Health Center, in Luhanska oblast, samples have been collected from 545 suspected cases, of which 75 are positive for COVID-19 (14% positivity rate), 54 recovered and 0 died as of 23 June. Whereas in Donetska oblast, 648 suspected cases have been reported, of which 376 are positive (58% positivity rate), 145 recovered and 8 died.

In Non-Government Controlled Area (NGCA), the situation is relatively worse than in GCA, especially with Luhansk not providing updates on a regular basis. In Donetsk, 1,054 cases were reported as of 23 June, including 308 recovered and 66 deaths. In Luhansk, 474 cases have been reported on 23 June, including 421 recovered and 11 deaths. High infection rate among healthcare workers is one of the of the major concerns reported in NGCA.

Public health situation

In GCA, the preparedness of healthcare facilities that are designated for COVID-19 has reportedly improved. As of 10th June, according to Cabinet of Ministers data, one-month need of healthcare facilities that are designated for COVID-19 is covered on 98% for hand rub; 83% for eye protection; 81% for respirators; 60% for medical masks; 83% for gloves and 33% for gowns.

Healthcare workers represent about a quarter of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Donetska oblast (NGCA). Since the first COVID-19 case was registered in Donetska oblast (NGCA) on 31 March through 10 June, over 200 health workers have reportedly got infected, representing 26 per cent of all confirmed cases.[1] While no precise information is available for Luhanska oblast (NGCA), some sources indicate an increase in the number of healthcare workers infected by COVID-19, with at least two mortalities. The percentage of medical workers that have contracted COVID-19 in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA) is 13% and 2% respectively.[2]

Healthcare facilities in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA) demonstrate low capacity in collecting and referring samples for testing, where gaps reportedly exist in terms of established referral mechanisms, equipment and supplies, staff knowledge, access to information, and logistical capacities. The Rapid Health Facility assessment conducted in April 2020 revealed that almost 70% of assessed facilities had none of the required resources for collecting samples, especially among rural health posts. In addition, a majority of facilities assessed had no PPE for patients, and 8% lacked PPE for healthcare workers, likely to affect their ability to implement effective infection prevention and control (IPC) measures.[3]

Healthcare facilities in NGCA lack personal protective equipment (PPE) to treat COVID-19 patients. Health workers engaged in the COVID-19 response in Donetsk (NGCA) reportedly lack sufficient PPE, while ambulance workers and district practitioners are not provided with protection coveralls and disposable gowns. In addition, the health system in NGCA sees a shortage of various COVID-19 medical supplies. In the meantime, scheduled surgeries have also been suspended.[4]

Secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA) have limited access to hygiene items, hindering their ability to effectively prevent and control the spread of the COVID-19 infection. According to the new analysis conducted by the WASH Cluster in May 2020, less than 20% of all secondary and tertiary hospitals in GCA (or 19 out of 116 hospitals in Donetska oblast and 9 out of 50 hospitals in Luhanska oblast) received an adequate amount of hygiene items[5], 2- 4% of hospitals (or 4 hospitals in Donetska oblast and 2 hospitals in Luhanska oblast) received a smaller delivery of such items and 80% (or 93 hospitals in Donetska and 40 hospitals in Luhanska) have not received any hygiene items at all, to assist the COVID-19 response, at the time of the analysis.[6]

Other pressing problems relevant to healthcare facilities in ECA (both, GCA and NGCA) include staffing problems (shortage of staff dedicated to COVID response, lack of anesthesiologists, doctors of retirement age), shortage of PPE, laboratory equipment/tests (limited quantities of PPE, shortage or lack of laboratory items), shortage of equipment for intensive care (lung ventilators, Oxygen concentrators, Pulse oximeters, Patient monitors and many other items), Shortage of pharmaceuticals (shortage of antipyretic drugs (anti-fever), antiviral, antihistamin and anti-inflammatory drugs).[7]

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[1] RIA News. "In the DPR, more than two hundred health workers became infected with the Coronavirus." Last modified June 10, 202 0. https://bit.ly/3hEYksM.

[2] The National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU). "Operational monitoring of the situation around COVID-19." Last modified June 18, 2020. https://nszu.gov.ua/en/covid/dashboard.

[3] REACH Initiative, Health Cluster Ukraine, and WASH Cluster Ukraine. *COVID-19 Preparedness: Rapid Health Facility Assessment (April, 2020)*. 2020. https://bit.ly/37Nv6Dx.

[4] OCHA Ukraine. "Ukraine: Humanitarian Impact of COVID-19 Situation Report No.4 - 3 June 2020." Last modified June 3, 2020. https://bit.ly/3dePoXI.

[5] Hospitals which received the WASH Cluster recommended hygiene/cleaning kits, adjusted for the size of the hospital.

[6] WASH Cluster analysis of the secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities access to hygiene items in Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA), using 2nd June 5W data.

[7] Médecins du Monde (MdM). "Rapid Health Facility Assessment: COVID-19 Preparedness (March,16 – ongoing)." Last modified May 2020.

Over 60 per cent of households along the contact line in eastern Ukraine reported reducing health expenditures in the last 30 days as many of them have been impacted by loss of jobs and income as a result of COVID-19. Furthermore, about one third (33%) of households reportedly have limited access to Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves in their settlements.[8]

The overall demand for the primary healthcare services has decreased, as demonstrated by WHO's forthcoming rapid assessment of primary care services during COVID-19. However, low demand for the primary healthcare services is being compensated by increased demand of consultations by the means of phone and online consultations all over Ukraine, but also in Donetsk and Luhansk GCA. The preliminary results of the survey show that during the lockdown measures, the most popular primary health care services that have been delivered in Ukraine and also Donetsk and Luhansk GCA include chronic care, immunization services, issue of prescription list, sick leaves and other certificates. The overall funding of the health sector, including non-COVID related health services from the central budget, has not been undermined by the impact of COVID-19 on economic growth.

The outbreak has caused a drop in the vaccination rates throughout the region. The April immunization data reflects a notable decline in annualized routine coverage rates by all antigens; measles-mumps-rubella vaccine coverage for both the first and second doses remains most affected with 30% reduction comparing to 2018-2019 rates. In the meantime, surveillance for vaccine-preventable diseases, and specially for measles and rubella, is challenged due to a high workload of national and regional surveillance staff, and particularly Regional Laboratory Centers, with regard to COVID-19 pandemic response.

Government measures

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine prolonged the quarantine restrictions until July 31, 2020. The adaptive approach adopted by the government envisages a possibility of strengthening quarantine measures in particular regions of Ukraine, if the situation requires.[9] On 11 June, 2020 the Ministry of Health of Ukraine updated the equipment tables of the emergency medical care system.[10]

Donetska and Luhanska oblasts (GCA) moved to the second stage of easing of the quarantine measures in accordance with the government's five-stage quarantine exit plan.[11] According to the latest information on the Ministry of Health website, both oblasts have met the criteria for easing of the quarantine measures.[12]

In Luhanska and Donetska oblast (NGCA), certain COVID-19-related restrictions were extended, while others were lifted. For example, restrictions on movement remain effective only in some regions of Luhanska oblast while markets and trading of food items resumed operations. Similarly, mass gatherings in Donetska oblasts remain banned while self-isolation of persons of 65 years and older is recommended, though not mandatory.

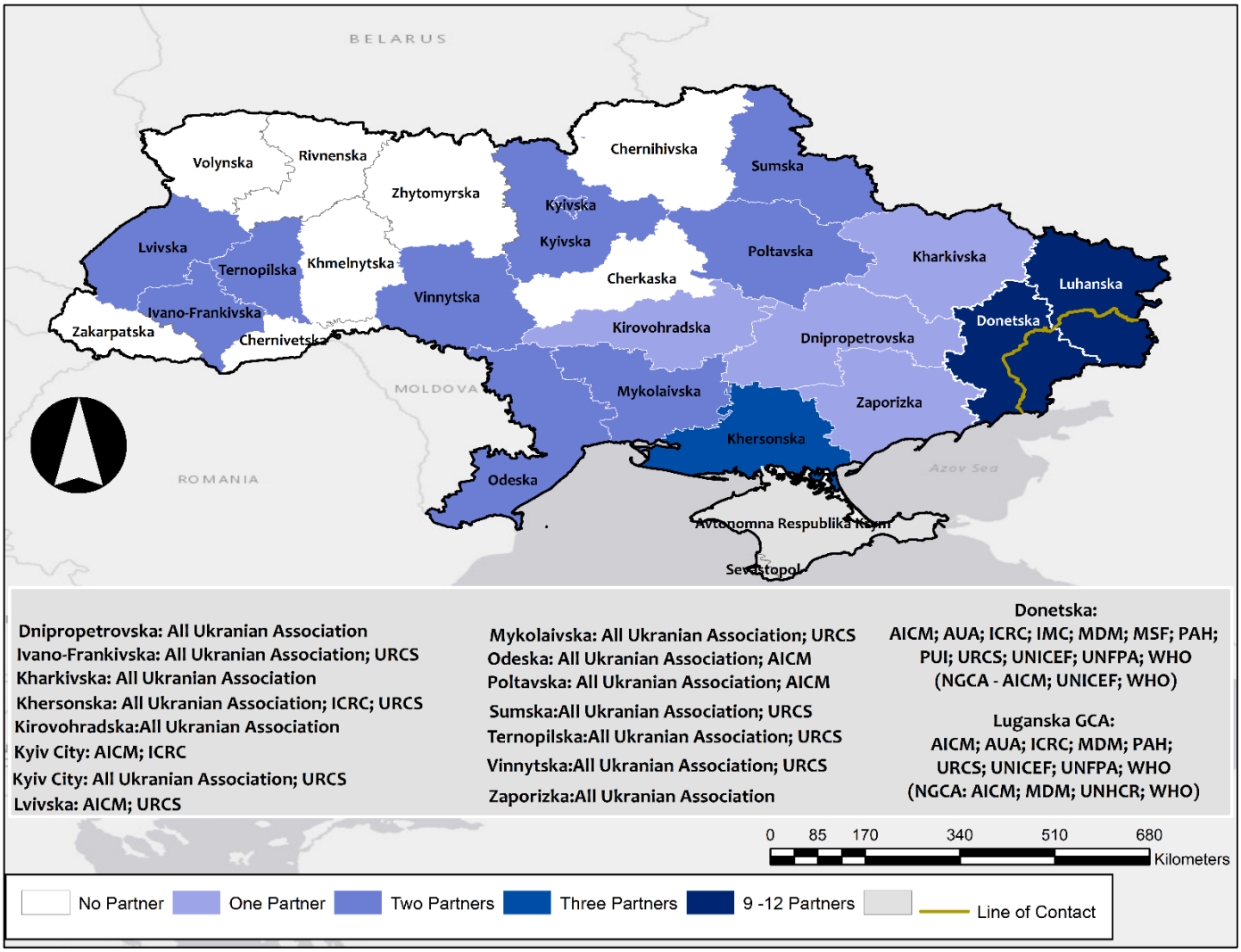
Partial opening of EECPs in GCA: On 2 June the Joint Force Operation of Ukraine (JFO) announced that two EECPs – 'Stanytsia Luhanska' and 'Mariinka' – would resume operation on 10 June. The opening of the EECPs, however, wasn't supported by the opposing party claiming that it wasn't a unilateral decision.[13] Following the announcement, humanitarian partners conducted a rapid assessment at EECPs to ensure that appropriate measures are in place once the EECPs are opened and fully operational.

[8] Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). "Ukraine. Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment, May 2020." Last modified May 2020.
[9] Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. "Government prolongs adaptive quarantine until July 31." Last modified June 17, 2020. https://bit.ly/2YOG5IF.
[10] Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. "Government prolongs adaptive quarantine until July 31." Last modified June 17, 2020. https://bit.ly/2YOG5IF.
[11] Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. "Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal unveils a step-by-step quarantine exit plan." Last modified April 24, 2020. https://bit.ly/30Y6pmq.
[12] Ministry of Health. "Indicators for weakening of the quarantine measures as of 18.06.2020." Last modified June 18, 2020. https://bit.ly/37L1sPd.
[13] Television and radio company of the so-called "LPR". "The statement of Kiev on the unilateral opening of the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP is a provocation - Kobtseva." Last modified June 9, 2020. https://bit.ly/2YKMF2Y.

The procedure for entering and exiting the EECPs in GCA was established on 4 June. According to the Government resolution #367, all persons coming from the temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions should use mobile App. "Action at home" for self-isolation. Otherwise, the entrance can be denied. In addition, the requirement of mandatory observation for persons coming from NGCA after the resumption of the EECPs was abolished.

Partial opening of EECPs in NGCA: On 12 June, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the so-called "Luhansk People's Republic" announced conditions for crossing of the "Stanytsia Luhanska" EECP, which will be carried out according to an agreed list and in quantities that do not exceed a reasonable burden on health facilities.[14] As reported by partners, crossings at EECP "Stanytsia Luhanska" are taking place in both directions while EECPs "Mariinka" and "Mayorsk" continue to operate in restricted mode. On 22 June, de-facto entities of Donetska oblast (NGCA) announced opening of the EECP "Olenivka", which is bordering with the Ukrainian EECP "Novotroitske". As reported, this decision was not coordinated with GCA authorities. For its part, the Ukrainian government authorities have decided to resume operations at "Novotroitske" EECP.

Health Cluster mapping by oblast – May 2020[15]



[14] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the so-called "LPR". "Conditions for crossing of the "Stanytsia Luhanska" EECP." Facebook page. Last modified June 12, 2020. https://bit.ly/37HQxpJ.

[15] Based on the latest 5W data from the Health Cluster partners, May 2020

Other Health Cluster Activities

Major Events

Event	Key Highlights
7 May: Health Cluster Meeting	• **The WHO laboratory assessment in GCA was finalized** and preliminary findings indicate that the above gap in testing in the two oblasts appeared not as a result of limited capacity of laboratories, but due to very few testing samples being collected. Therefore, most of the work needs to be directed at supporting mobile teams which are gathering samples. As reported, mobile teams lack PPE, training on the usage of PPE, support with transportation and COVID-19 sample kits. • **The Cluster briefed partners on the agreements made at the joint Protection/Health/WASH cluster meeting held on 6 May**. It had been agreed that Protection Cluster partners which work in communities can use their presence to notify Health Cluster partners on suspected cases to stop the transmission. The meeting reconfirmed the need for enhanced coordination and knowledge sharing across clusters. • **Cluster's input to the revised 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has been finalized** with a total requirement of $17,958,883 USD for COVID-19 response. This includes $1,380,881 USD of repurposed funding and $16,578,002 USD of additional funding requirement for COVID-19. More details available in the Ukraine: 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) - Revised Requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.[16] • **The COVID-19 response Partners Mapping tool has been finalized** and coordination at the local level is to be managed by respective dedicated agency working in the area. Going forward, WASH and Protection Clusters will share this information and contact details with their partners to facilitate future coordination of COVID-19 related activities.
28 May: Health Cluster Meeting	• **Monthly COVID-19 HRP Reporting.** The Cluster reminded partners about the upcoming deadline to submit monthly COVID-19 HRP reporting and highlighted key changes in the updated COVID-19 5W monthly reporting template. The Cluster will then share a consolidated input with OCHA to be incorporated into Ukraine's interactive COVID-19 response dashboard. • **Update on current UHF allocations.** In total, five health projects have been supported by the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF) since the beginning of the outbreak: two projects supporting contact-tracing in Luhansk and Donetsk, GCA (implementing partners: MdM and PUI), and three projects providing targeted support to vulnerable people and healthcare facilities in NGCA to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 (implementing partners: UNICEF/DDC, AICM & MdM). Proposals which were not prioritized will be considered for other funding opportunities within the Health Cluster. • **Health Cluster Partners' Survey.** The Cluster presented findings from the Health Cluster partners' survey, including information on the current composition, geographic focus, information and coordination needs of the partners.
04 June: Technical Meeting on anticipated opening of the EECPs	• **Discussion on the rapid Assessment Initiative:** WASH, Health and Protection Clusters, under the leadership and technical support of OCHA, initiated a rapid assessment of EECPs. The tentative time of the assessment is Wednesday-Friday (12 – 15 June). To facilitate the assessment, a short checklist has been developed by WASH and Health Clusters.

[16] OCHA Ukraine. "Ukraine: 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) - Revised Requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic." Last modified June 9, 2020. https://bit.ly/2Bmv49q.

	• **Discussion on the mapping of referral system for sample collection :** Health Cluster has developed a template to help map ongoing and planned interventions at EECPs, as well as identify possible gaps and needs in the response. In addition to mapping, the template includes information on nearest COVID-19 designated hospital and distance to the EECP.
11 June: Health Cluster Meeting	• **A small TWG on surveillance and contact tracing has been set up under the national Medical WG**. It aims to develop a nationwide guidance on contact tracing. Considering MdM and PUI are implementing contact tracing project in GCA on contact tracing, the Cluster offered to facilitate the inclusion of the two partners into the national WG. • **Partners enquired about the rapid spike in COVID-19 cases in Sloviansk.** Partners which work in the area (WHO and PUI) promised to investigate the situation and get back with more details on the disease transmission and if the cases are clustered in one locality or wide spread in Sloviansk. • **Update on EECP re-opening:** Following the news on partial reopening of the EECPs, Health Cluster called a small technical working group, consisting of partners working at EECPs, OCHA, as well as Protection and Shelter/NFI Clusters. The meeting resulted in two outcomes: 1) decision to conduct a joint rapid assessment to evaluate the readiness and support required to facilitate safe opening of the EECPs & 2) initiative to map ongoing and planned interventions and a simple referral system for sample collection and response at EECPs. The results of the joint assessment and mapping will be available next week. • **Feedback on partners response for COVID-19- May 2020.** Health Cluster appreciated partners contribution to the 5W monthly reporting on COVID-19. While few reports from partners are still pending, the Cluster presented preliminary findings from the analysis and promised to share more information in due course.

Update from MHPSS TWG

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group (MHPSS TWG), co-chaired by WHO and IMC continues to operate and conduct its monthly coordination meetings at national level and once per two months on a regional level (covering partners operating in Kramatorsk, Mariupol and Severodonetsk), as well as maintains several communication platforms such as WG Newsletter, MHPSS TWG page at HR website and MHPSS Facebook group. Considering changed modalities due to quarantine measures meetings on national and regional levels are conducted online.

MHPSS partners are supported with evolving issues related COVID-19 response as well as with pre-existing humanitarian crisis challenges in eastern Ukraine. Partners are ensured with timely translated guidelines recommended by IASC as a part of COVID-19 response.

As the number of newly created hotlines were developed during COVID-19 response to cover the population needs in MHPSS, the group finalised and disseminated the hotlines list in May: there is a number of hotlines and organisations providing MHPSS online and covering whole Ukraine and eastern part of the country particularly.

MHPSS TWG proceeded with regular mapping exercise to identify and visualise the resources available for MHPSS for the population and COVID-19 specific activities particularly. The updated mapping tool is aimed at effective coordination of partners` efforts and allows to better serve referral purposes. The platform for further map is being identified and tested to cover the purposes and needs of MHPSS TWG partners.

On June 2, online workshop on **Basics of the Gender Based Violence Response and Prevention in Ukraine: PSS and Multisectoral Approach** was held in cooperation with GBV sub-cluster and addressed the issues of GBV response during COVID-19 outbreak.

On June 18, MHPSS TWG Ukraine launched **Series of workshops & supervision "Addressing MHPSS aspects of COVID-19 pandemic"** based on needs reported by partners and related with new circumstances that brings COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative is aimed to strengthen capacity of humanitarian organizations in adapting to the changed environment created by the pandemic and ensure effective MHPSS response along with maintaining essential services to the population both affected by the pandemic and pre-existing crisis in eastern Ukraine. The workshops and following supervision will be held online and conducted by international experts from IASC global reference group on MHPSS in emergency settings during June-August 2020. The initiative will cover overview of recently released MHPSS evidence-based recommendations and tools, role of multilateral collaboration, programme planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as inclusion of vulnerable groups during COVID-19 pandemic.

Useful links and resources

- Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19: interim guidance, updated 5 June 2020 - EN, RU
- Advocacy Note on Assisting Displaced and Conflict-Affected Older People in Ukraine, June 2020 – EN, RU, UA
- Basic Psychosocial Skills: A Guide for COVID-19 Responders - EN
- Cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces in the context of COVID-19 – EN, RU
- Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19: interim guidance, 10 May 2020 – EN, RU
- Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19, 16 April – EN, RU
- Clinical management of COVID-19 – interim guidance, WHO – EN
- Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine: Considerations for the safe re-opening of EECPs, May 2020 - EN
- Ukraine: 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) - Revised Requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Ukraine: Humanitarian Impact of COVID-19 Situation Report No.4 - 3 June 2020 - EN

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