



**CHERNIHIV, CHERNIHIVSKA  
OBLAST, UKRAINE**

Alla's home was hit during an attack in the first weeks of the war. Thanks to the NGO ZOA, and the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund's support, she could install new windows, doors, and a roof. Photo: ZOA/Natalia Bohdan, 3 February 2023.

# WINTER RESPONSE PLAN

## UKRAINE

**OCTOBER 2023 - MARCH 2024**

ISSUED AUGUST 2023

## Key Figures

PEOPLE IN NEED OF HUMANITARIAN AID	TOTAL PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE TARGETED WINTER ACTIVITIES	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDING AVAILABLE (US\$)
<b>17.6M</b>	<b>11.1M</b>	<b>1.3M</b>	<b>\$268.2M</b>	<b>\$92.6M</b>

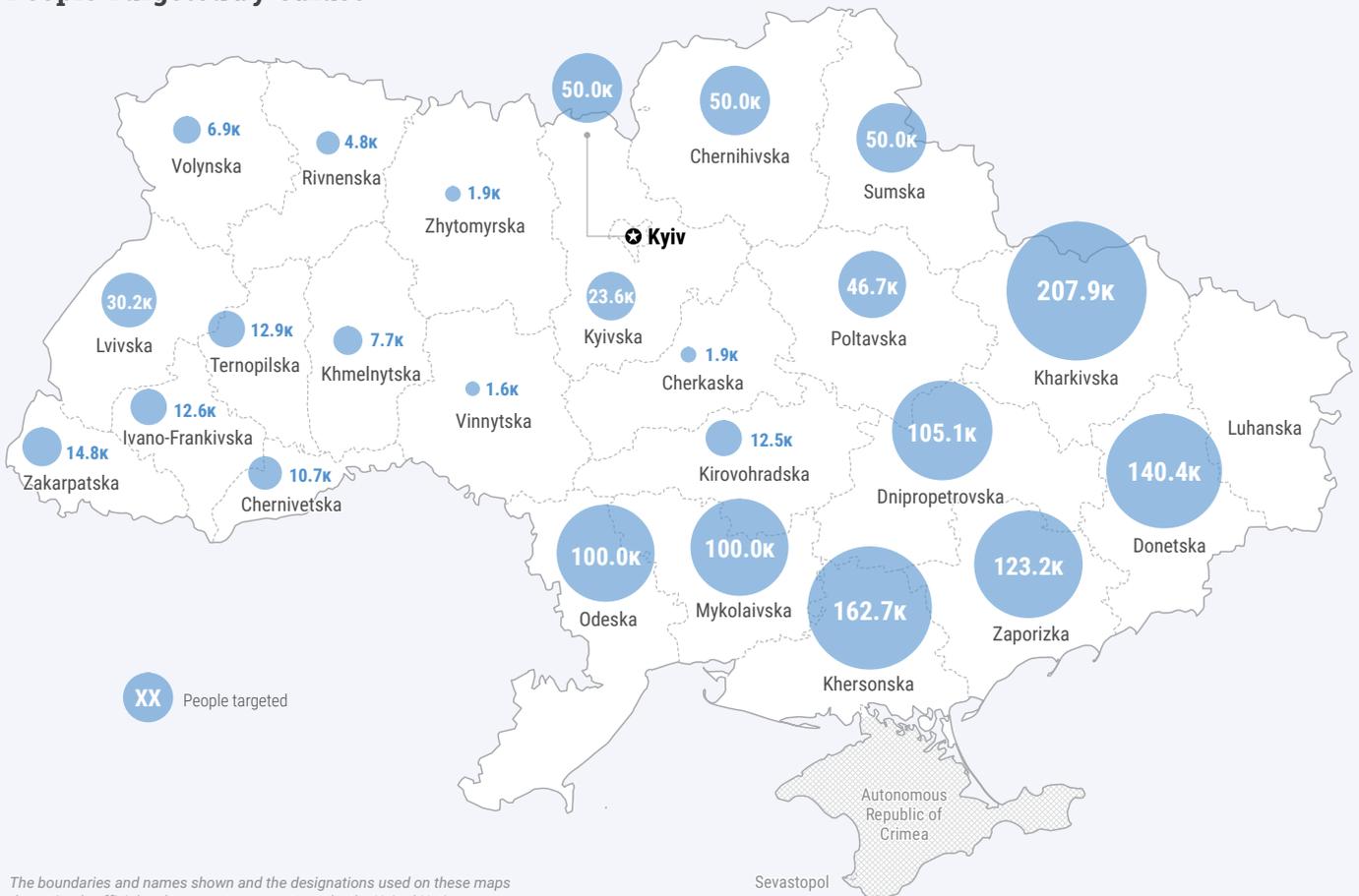
### People Targeted with Winter Activities by Cluster



This document gives an overview of the activities outlined in the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to address specific humanitarian needs caused or exacerbated by the cold season in Ukraine. The number of people targeted and total funding required are part of the response prioritization and financial requirements of the HRP and a further estimation to include the

three first months of 2024. Additional assessments – including through the ongoing Humanitarian Programme Cycle exercise for 2024 – will be carried out to determine the need for a revision of people in need, targeted and financial requests before the end of the year to ensure adequate response in the first months of 2024.

### People Targeted by Oblast



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

# Analysis of the Situation

The war in Ukraine has caused widespread destruction of homes, massive displacement and devastated vital infrastructure, including energy, water and heating systems, leaving millions of people vulnerable to the upcoming extremely cold winter.

**The onset of winter conditions in Ukraine – which typically starts around October – brings a new dimension to the grave humanitarian crisis in a country where the war has left nearly 18 million, or half of its population, in need of aid.** Millions of people, particularly those taking shelter in displacement centres – often ill-suited for the cold season – or people in front-line communities, living in damaged homes or without access to heating, could face a perilous winter, as temperatures drop below -20 degrees Celsius. The freezing weather makes life even more difficult and puts in danger communities already overwhelmed by the challenges caused by intense hostilities, destruction, loss of jobs and livelihoods, and limited access to water, heating and other essential services.

**An estimated 1.4 million homes in Ukraine have been damaged or destroyed since the escalation of the war in February 2022,** according to the Ukraine Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, published in March 2023. The situation is particularly worrying in front-line communities across Donetsk, Kharkivska, Luhanska, Zaporizka, Khersonska and Mykolaivska oblasts, where attacks continue to cause damage to homes and add to the already massive destruction, which is further exacerbated by the floods caused by the kakhovka dam disaster. People in these communities – mostly older people, people with disability or other vulnerable groups – are often forced to live in homes with leaking roofs, broken windows, and damaged walls, which hamper their capacity to warm their places and stay protected against harsh temperatures. Damages to water systems, electricity and gas networks exacerbate the situation and increase the risks.

**Nearly 5.1 million people remain internally displaced across Ukraine, with between 2 and 3 million of them seeking refuge in front-line oblasts of Ukraine, where humanitarian needs are most acute.** People uprooted by the war, including those trying to return home or coming back to Ukraine from abroad, face specific challenges and risks. Displacement sites – hosting over 116,000 people – are often ill-prepared for the winter, and the lack of maintenance or damage affects heating systems, water, electricity and gas supplies. Close to 30 per cent of the centres will require some sort of repair to prepare them for winter. After more than a year of displacement, people taking shelter in these sites are exhausting their coping mechanisms and have limited capacity to purchase essential items like warm clothes

or blankets. There are also a number of displaced people living in individual rented homes that lack proper insulation or heating systems. Even in places where heating is available, families might face challenges to afford to pay for it, as rising living costs are coupled with loss of income and depletion of savings.

**People already facing dire needs might be forced to make hard choices between food and warmth,** and support to sustain or restore livelihoods, particularly in rural areas, will be crucial. The impact of the war on livelihoods pushes the most vulnerable to the brink, and increased living costs during the winter due to the need to pay for heating, fuel, or warm clothes can force many to reduce food consumption. The price of essential commodities will likely increase further, and goods might not be available at all in areas under active hostilities, due to the disruption of markets.

**New attacks on energy infrastructure, water and gas systems could further aggravate the situation.** In the last quarter of 2022, waves of attacks on power systems led to a severe energy crisis, leaving millions without electricity, water or heating in the middle of the winter. Although the Government of Ukraine informed that power generation capacity will be completely restored at the beginning of the winter, and that the country has stored enough gas to cover 80 per cent of the demand, any additional shock could lead to another energy crisis. Already, in some areas of Donetsk, Kharkivska or Khersonska oblasts, recent attacks reported in July caused power cuts and the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam in June hampered access to water and electricity to hundreds of thousands of people in southern Ukraine.

# Response Strategy

In the first six months of 2023, humanitarian organizations reached over 7.3 million people with humanitarian assistance, including winter-specific activities in the first quarter of the year. Activities aimed at ensuring that the most vulnerable people in Ukraine are adequately protected and able to cope with harsh weather conditions in a dignified manner will again increase in the coming months.

**Under this Winter Response Plan, which brings an overview of the activities outlined in the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to address specific humanitarian needs caused or exacerbated by the cold season in Ukraine, humanitarian partners are appealing for over US\$268 million to deliver winter assistance to over 1.3 million people across Ukraine.** The Plan will be carried out in support of the efforts by the Government of Ukraine, including national, regional and local authorities, and will be complemented by the regular humanitarian programming, which targets over 11 million people in need of assistance across Ukraine in 2023. At the same time, development actors are scaling up their recovery and reconstruction efforts, which will ultimately contribute to building the country's resilience to the cold season and strengthening longer-term response systems.

**The response will complement and build upon efforts carried out during the last cold season, when humanitarians distributed over 4,000 generators and provided winter support to hundreds of thousands of people.** The generators provided in the last quarter of 2022 and the first months of 2023 will be essential to ensure electricity for hospitals, water pumping facilities, heat generation, schools, and places hosting displaced people. The assistance also included much-needed supplies and repairs of homes and preparation of collective centres for displaced people.

**In the 2023-2024 winter response, humanitarians will prioritize support in front-line communities and regions, ensuring that assistance is provided as close as possible to people in need.** In areas facing active hostilities or fighting, including Donetska, Dnipropetrovska, Kharkivska, Khersonska, Luhanska, Mykolaivska, Sumska and Zaporizka oblasts, the response will prioritize the repair of district heating systems and maintenance support, including after possible new attacks, to ensure warmth and protection to thousands of people impacted by the destruction of vital infrastructure. In addition to this, specific support to critical institutions like hospitals, clinics and social institutions, including through the provision of mobile boilers or other heating systems will be crucial to ensure continuity of vital services. Humanitarians will also distribute house repair

materials, as well as winter clothes, heating appliances and other critical household items. The provision of agricultural and livestock inputs will also be crucial to ensure food security for people facing increased challenges to sustain their livelihoods.

**In areas hosting a high number of displaced people, including Kyiv city, Lvivska and Odeska oblast, the priority will be to support displaced people in collective centres,** through the refurbishment of the sites and provision of winter materials. Across the country, humanitarian organizations will also provide displaced people with rental support and insulation of substandard homes to ensure their safety and wellbeing during the winter. Similar to areas close to the front line, the response across the country will also include repair and maintenance of energy and heating systems damaged or impacted by hostilities to ensure provision of vital services.

**The response outlined in this Plan will be delivered via a combination of services, in-kind and cash assistance.** Whenever feasible and appropriate, cash assistance will be prioritized, according to the vulnerability criteria, the access and proximity of functioning markets and the availability of the needed winter items and services. In areas close to the front-line, in-kind assistance is normally the most appropriate modality, given the disruption of markets and services. In all regions, a range of services, including critical repairs, will complement the response package.



#### LYPTSI, KHARKIVSKA OBLAST, UKRAINE

A woman enters her home, damaged due to hostilities in Kharkivska oblast. The NGO Proliska, with the support of the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund, provided her with critical items to ensure her safety during winter. Photo: Proliska, November 2022.

## Centrality of Protection and Targeting Criteria

The activities outlined in the Winter Response Plan are principled, realistic and feasible, and all organizations are committed to putting people, gender equality and protection at the centre of the response.

Since the escalation of the war in February 2022, humanitarian partners in Ukraine have increased efforts and measures to enhance accountability to affected people (AAP), prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), increase information and communication about conflict-related sexual violence and human trafficking, ensure the response is gender and age-sensitive, and promote protection through all aspects of humanitarian programmes and advocacy. This commitment was taken into consideration when activities of the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, and the inter-cluster response monitoring guidance has set out the minimum standards for reporting on the provision of humanitarian assistance disaggregated by sex, age, and disability. In addition, the PSEA Network, the AAP Working Group and the dedicated Gender Advisor participated actively in the Humanitarian Programming Cycle to ensure these perspectives were taken into consideration in all assessments and plans.

The severity of needs, response capacity and access constraints were taken into consideration to prioritize the geographical scope and the target groups of this Plan, with the bulk of the response taking place in the front-line oblasts. Non-displaced people living in areas close to the front line are particularly vulnerable and will be prioritized. Hostilities led to widespread damage, cutting off many from energy, water and heating systems. People often live in damaged houses and need support with repairs. Many of these communities have seen their markets disrupted, and face immense challenges to access winter clothes and other essentials. Displaced people in collective centres – mainly in the west – some parts of north and south of Ukraine, will also receive particular attention, to ensure places are prepared for the freezing temperatures, and winter supplies are in place. In other regions, humanitarians will support returnees and displaced people in substandard houses, including those struggling to pay utility bills due to lack of income.



ZHELANNE, DONETSKA OBLAST, UKRAINE

A humanitarian convoy delivered vital supplies to support nearly 3,600 civilians who remain in the front-line Ocheretynska hromada to go through the winter. Photo: OCHA/Anastasiia Alokhhina, 10 February 2023.

## Access challenges and other risks

Insecurity, access challenges and limited supplies or resources availability, including funding, can impact humanitarians' ability to support people in need.

**Intensified hostilities and fighting along the entire front line, as well as impediments and obstacles imposed on aid organizations have further impacted humanitarian access in Ukraine in the first six months of 2023, making it increasingly challenging and unpredictable.** Between January and June 2023, nearly 100 incidents impacting humanitarian operations were reported, highlighting the complex environment humanitarian organizations in Ukraine are faced with. The situation is not expected to improve in the coming months, as hostilities appear to be further intensifying in the east and south of the country, with attacks increasingly impacting civilians and civilian infrastructure.

**Access to areas under the military control of the Russian Federation continued to be extremely challenging, despite extensive efforts and ongoing engagements.** During the first six months of 2023, only 4 per cent of the humanitarian response took place in areas controlled by Russian forces. The blockage of the movement of relief supplies across the front line and restrictions on the movement of personnel as well as operational interference in humanitarian activities will likely limit any interventions in areas under the military control of the Russian Federation. In other parts of Ukraine, military conscrip-

tion of humanitarian personnel and bureaucratic impediments have also been reported, adding additional layers of complexity to the efficient delivery of aid.

**Intensifying hostilities and damage to specific infrastructure, including energy, could push prices up and increase demand for limited supplies.** During the last winter, the energy crisis increased the demand for generators, prices rose steeply, and local procurement was nearly impossible. Demands for other supplies – including repair materials – also made prices increase and limited availability.

**Lack of funding can delay or limit the response. Humanitarians in Ukraine had received, at the end of July, less than 30 per cent of the \$3.9 billion requested for the response.** In some parts of the south, east and north of the country, the humanitarian response could not reach more than 25 per cent of people targeted, due to a combination of funding shortages and other operational challenges. Timely and increased funding will be crucial to ensure aid workers can provide assistance to people whose lives are being impacted by the war, including during the winter.

# Activities and Funding Required by Cluster

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## OZERSHCHYNA, KYIVSKA OBLAST, UKRAINE

This house on the road, close to Zabuiania Village, is only an example of the level of destruction left by intense hostilities in Kyivska oblast in February and March 2022. Photo: UNHCR/Victoria Andrievska, 18 November 2022.





## Food Security and Livelihoods

PEOPLE IN NEED	TOTAL PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE TARGETED WINTER ACTIVITIES	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDING AVAILABLE (US\$)
11.1M	5.4M	142.2K	\$16.8M	\$1.2M



## Shelter and Non-Food Items

PEOPLE IN NEED	TOTAL PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE TARGETED WINTER ACTIVITIES	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDING AVAILABLE (US\$)
8.3M	3.3M	1.1M	\$205.4M	\$69.4M



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

PEOPLE IN NEED	TOTAL PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE TARGETED WINTER ACTIVITIES	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDING AVAILABLE (US\$)
11M	7.6M	800K	\$46M	\$22M

### People Targeted and Financial Requirements by Activity

SECTOR	ACTIVITY	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
Food Security & Livelihood	Agriculture and livestock inputs	142.2 K	16.8 M
Shelter & Non-Food Items	Insulation of substandard houses (non-conflict-damaged)	31.5 K	32.5 M
	Provision of NFIs	582.1 K	75.8 M
	Provision of Winter Clothes	149.6 K	23.5 M
	Provision of Winter Heating	102.7 K	14.7 M
	Refurbishment of Collective Sites	30.0 K	14.7 M
	Rental support	11.7 K	1.7 M
	Support for winter energy needs	221.1 K	42.5 M
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	District heating Operation & Maintenance support and repairs	800.0 K	46 M

# Why this Response Plan Requires Particular Attention?

## The most vulnerable are at risk!

The massive destruction the war caused to homes and other critical infrastructure, including energy and heating systems, puts the most vulnerable people of Ukraine at particular risk when the winter arrives. Many villages and towns close to the front line are cut off from heating, gas or water, leaving thousands of people at risk. Those who remain in these areas – normally older people, people with disabilities, people with low income or other vulnerable groups – often live in damaged houses, exacerbating the challenges imposed by the lack of essential services. Affordable heating options via district heating systems rely on water supply, and therefore is crucial. Options to access heating can be extremely limited. Some displaced people across the country are also living in houses that do not meet the right conditions to protect them from freezing temperatures. People displaced who had their income and livelihoods impacted are exhausting their coping mechanisms – and may be forced to make hard decisions between food and warmth.

**Without adequate support to keep their places warm during the winter, the lives and wellbeing of the most vulnerable people of Ukraine will be at stake during the winter.**

## The winter can further affect food security

The war devastated markets close to the front line and also people's financial capacity to access food when it is available. For many living in these areas, food produced by backyard livestock are the main – if not the only – source of proteins and other critical nutrients. However, their capacity to ensure production during the winter will likely be impacted due to their limited capacity to afford sufficient animal feed, veterinary medicines and other inputs at a moment when livestock needs especial care to survive and thrive during the freezing winter.

Ensuring these small-scale farmers have sufficient reserves of animal feed and inputs during the winter will be vital. **This assistance will preserve their livelihoods, ensuring people will not go hungry and will have nutritious food, including eggs, meat, milk, and honey on their table every day.**

## Humanitarian action will be vital!

The harsh winter only adds a layer of risk to people already facing dire humanitarian needs – they already need assistance now. In addition, hostilities will continue to critically impact their ability to have a safe and warm place to live, and their access to water, food, electricity, and heating. Family's eroding purchasing power is coupled with disruption of markets, making their access to vital winter items and services extremely challenging.

For them, humanitarian action is vital. The delivery of supplies, the repair of heating systems, the insulation of houses or preparation of warm and dignifying displacement centres, the support to pay the rent so they have a roof over their heads, will be truly life-saving when freezing temperatures knock at the doors of the most vulnerable people in Ukraine.

**Immediate action is needed now to prevent loss of life and ensure the wellbeing of people already living under harsh conditions due to the war.**

## Funding is needed now!

Without immediate additional funding, humanitarian partners will be unable to rapidly procure the necessary supplies and ensure they have the right resources to support people – and save and sustain lives – before and during the winter months. Repair work – both of houses or of critical heating and water systems – take time and have to start now. Humanitarian organizations will also need flexible and timely funding to ensure we can rapidly respond to any emerging situation, including in case of new attacks affecting energy infrastructure in Ukraine – which is likely to happen. However, by the end of July 2023, humanitarians had received only 30 per cent of the US\$3.9 billion requested for the Humanitarian Response Plan – which includes the winter response until the end of 2023.

**This is not enough. More funding is urgently needed so humanitarians can have the right resources to ensure people suffering the consequences of the war will not face more risks during the winter.**

# How to Contribute?

## Contribute towards Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan

Donors can contribute directly to aid organizations participating in the international humanitarian coordination mechanisms in Ukraine, as identified in this Humanitarian Response Plan. For more information on Ukraine's 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview, Humanitarian Response Plan, other monitoring reports or on how to donate directly to organizations participating in the plan, please visit:

<https://response.reliefweb.int/ukraine>

## Donate through the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF)

Donors can contribute through the UHF. This country-based pooled fund (CBPF) contributes to a coordinated humanitarian action, supporting the highest-priority projects of the best-placed responders (including international and national NGOs and UN agencies) through an inclusive and transparent process that follows the priorities set out in this Humanitarian Response Plan. The UHF allows donors to pool their contributions into single, unearmarked funds to support local humanitarian efforts which will, in turn, not only enable a coordinated, flexible and inclusive humanitarian response, but also strategically maximize available resources.

Visit the website for information on how to contribute to the Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan:

<https://www.unocha.org/ukraine/about-uhf>

For questions, send an email at:

[ochaukraine@un.org](mailto:ochaukraine@un.org)

## Donate through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

CERF is a fast and effective way to support rapid humanitarian response. CERF provides rapid initial funding for life-saving actions at the onset of emergencies and for poorly funded, essential humanitarian operations in protracted crises. The OCHA-managed CERF receives contributions from various donors – mainly governments, but also private companies, foundations, charities and individuals – which are combined into a single fund. This is used for crises anywhere in the world.

Find out more about the CERF and how to donate by visiting the website:

[www.unocha.org/cerf/donate](http://www.unocha.org/cerf/donate)

## In-kind Relief Aid

The United Nations urges donors to make cash rather than in-kind donations, for maximum speed and flexibility, and to ensure the aid materials that are most needed are the ones delivered. If you can make only in-kind contributions in response to disasters and emergencies, please send an email with relevant information concerning your contribution to:

[logik@un.org](mailto:logik@un.org)

## Registering and recognising your contributions

OCHA manages the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), which records all reported humanitarian contributions (cash, in-kind, multilateral and bilateral) to emergencies. Its purpose is to give credit and visibility to donors for their generosity and to show the total amount of funding and expose gaps in humanitarian plans. Please report yours to FTS, either by email to [fts@un.org](mailto:fts@un.org) or through the online contribution report form at:

<http://fts.unocha.org>