


# Ukraine



**Conflict between armed groups and government forces in eastern Ukraine has affected millions of people since fighting began in April 2014.**

In February 2022, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that some 2.9 million people in Ukraine were in need of humanitarian assistance, while the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that some 1.5 million Ukrainians had been driven from their homes by fighting, seeking refuge elsewhere in the country and leaving Ukraine with the world's ninth-largest population of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Clashes along the line of contact (LoC) in eastern Ukraine have had far-reaching humanitarian consequences to residents, including loss of life and livelihoods, displacement and disrupted access to basic needs. Residents in conflict-affected areas have experienced electricity and water cuts as well

as heating outages. Insecurity, cold winters and a difficult economic situation further compound people's suffering: more than 3 million Ukrainians, primarily in areas not controlled by the government, have exhausted their resources and rely upon humanitarian assistance to meet their most basic needs. Given the invasion by Russian forces in February 2022, these numbers are sure to rise.

The government has registered 1.3 million IDPs, about half of whom have successfully integrated into local communities. Between April 2014, when the conflict began, and December 2021, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UHCHR) estimated that civilian deaths totaled more than 3,400, with more than 7,000 injured. Casualties have continued to rise as the conflict has expanded.

International Medical Corps stands ready to provide medical, mental health and other healthcare-related services in response to any escalation in the scale and scope of the conflict.

International Medical Corps Ukraine works to increase access to quality child-protection and psychosocial support services for those living in conflict-affected communities through mobile protection teams, in partnership with local organizations and the Ukraine Ministry of Health. Our team provides crucial mobile health services in 19 villages near the LoC, as well as critical training on infection prevention and control (IPC) to healthcare workers and community residents about health and hygiene.



## STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN UKRAINE

International Medical Corps carried out a mental health needs assessment in three of Ukraine's 24 administrative regions, known as oblasts, to generate policy and operational guidance that would strengthen the integration of mental health into primary healthcare and other community-based services. The assessment, which focused on the most common mental disorders—including anxiety, depression, distress and alcohol abuse—engaged various key stakeholders at the global, national and regional levels. As a result, we distributed [a comprehensive assessment](#) outlining key policy recommendations for strengthening and expanding community-based mental health care in Ukraine.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)

International Medical Corps works directly in communities and with local partner organizations to provide appropriate MHPSS programming to those in need. We use mobile teams to reach villages along the LOC, and work through partners in non-government- controlled areas. Psychologists, case workers and community-based facilitators have established support groups for adults and older people, to reduce social isolation and increase contact within the community through psychoeducation and recreational activities. Psychoeducational topics are needs-based and addressed through participatory activities aimed at improving well-being. Since 2017, we have supported thousands of people—more than 2,000 in one project alone—with psychosocial support, targeting hard-to-reach areas of eastern Ukraine.

We work to strengthen the availability of MHPSS services in Ukraine according to international principles, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on MHPSS in emergency settings. We provide MHPSS-related training and capacity-building activities for government employees, as well as social workers and community outreach workers in the area where we are operating, on international guidelines and evidence-based practices. Working with the World Health Organization (WHO), we continue to co-lead MHPSS Technical Working Group coordination, both at the regional and national level, strengthening referral pathways, sharing best practices, and building capacities of MHPSS actors and partners in other priorities.



## PROTECTION: CHILD PROTECTION, PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

### Child protection

To support children and adolescents residing in areas of conflict, International Medical Corps and its partners have created safe spaces that promote well-being, as well as social and emotional development, through recreational learning activities, group-based psychosocial support (PSS), child-protection curriculum development and awareness-raising.

### Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

From 2015 to 2020, International Medical Corps delivered GBV prevention and response programs in partnership with local organizations and community structures. We organized safe spaces for women and girls, trained caseworkers to provide individualized care for women and child survivors of violence, and mobilized communities to reduce risks and prevent incidents of violence. We also trained staff of NGOs and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to integrate core principles of GBV prevention and response into their work. In response to the war that began in February 2022, we plan to harness our experience to renew and expand GBV services to help those affected by the conflict.

### Psychosocial support (PSS)

We promote essential life skills, including self-awareness, group and community interaction, and peer and family relationships. Parents and caregivers participate in group-based psychoeducational activities to build skills related to self-esteem,

communication, how to express parental love, how to respond to children in distress and positive coping. Through the PSS program, adults aged 55 and above participate in group sessions that examine the relationship between physical and mental health, what stress and distress are, how to manage stress and how to help family and community members cope with distress. Our team provides activities for men that focus on how to engage in life fully, how to cope with difficult feelings and how to respond in a positive way.

We also offer individual interventions, including short-term psychological consultations with psychologists, and emotional support and PSS consultations through our caseworkers. Our team provides basic mental health case management and psychological consultation and psychosocial support sessions. We also offer training on psychological first aid (PFA) for adults and children, as well as professional emotional-burnout workshops to community members.

## HEALTH

International Medical Corps works with local healthcare facilities—including ambulatory clinics, first-aid points, family medicine practices and long-term care homes—to equip each with handwashing stations, provide IPC training and promote hygiene for the communities accessing those facilities. International Medical Corps is also working with health facility cleaners to improve their understanding of how to reduce the spread of disease. With a local partner, we operate a mobile medical unit, providing healthcare services—including specialties such as a gynecology and cardiology, as well as prescription medication—to 19 villages around Mariupol.



[www.InternationalMedicalCorps.org](http://www.InternationalMedicalCorps.org)

A pre-eminent first responder since 1984, International Medical Corps delivers emergency medical and related services to those affected by conflict, disaster and disease, no matter where they are, no matter what the conditions. We also train people in their communities, providing them with the skills they need to recover, chart their own path to self-reliance and become effective first responders themselves.

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