UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

MONTHLY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Ukraine
December 2023

In Dnipro, east Ukraine, UNHCR's local NGO partner Proliska distributed wooden boards and plastic sheeting to help people immediately cover damaged windows following the largescale attack on 29 December. © Proliska

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Russian attacks against densely populated cities and towns across Ukraine intensified at the end of the year. On 29 December, the Russian Federation launched a massive attack with missiles and drones against locations across Ukraine including Cherkaska, Dnipropetrovska, Lvivska, Kharkivska, Khmelnytska, Kyivska, Odeska, Sumska and Zaporizka oblasts. The UN Secretary-General condemned the attack in the strongest terms. At least 58 civilians were killed and around 160 people injured.

On 30 December, a missile strike in Kharkiv injured 26 civilians. A supermarket, a small shopping centre, several stores, and at least five residential buildings were damaged.

The **UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU)** verified at least 592 civilian casualties (101 killed and 491 injured) in Ukraine in December 2023, although the actual number is likely to be higher. This constitutes a 26.5% increase in verified civilian casualties when compared with the previous month. In total, since the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, HRMMU has recorded 29,330 civilian casualties in the country (10,191 killed and 19,139 injured).

2.63M People reached with assistance between January to December 2023*

Protection Received protection information, counselling, and support**

1,480,928

Cash assistance Supported with multi-purpose cash and/or cash for winter energy needs

899,039

NFI Reached with essential items, including in hard-to-access areas by humanitarian convoys

575,273

Shelter/Housing Received emergency shelter and housing support, including in collective sites

247,160

Collective sites Supported with safe access to multi-sectoral services in collective sites, including winterization support

99,008

* The targets are subject to the receipt of the funding requirements
** Also includes calls to hotlines

KEY FIGURES

4.3M people reached with UNHCR assistance in **2022** (24 February - 31 December 2022)

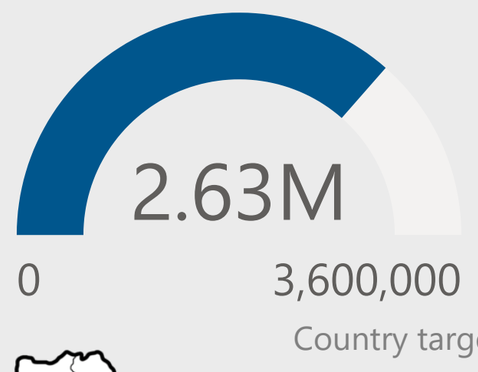
17.6M people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2023 *(source: OCHA)*

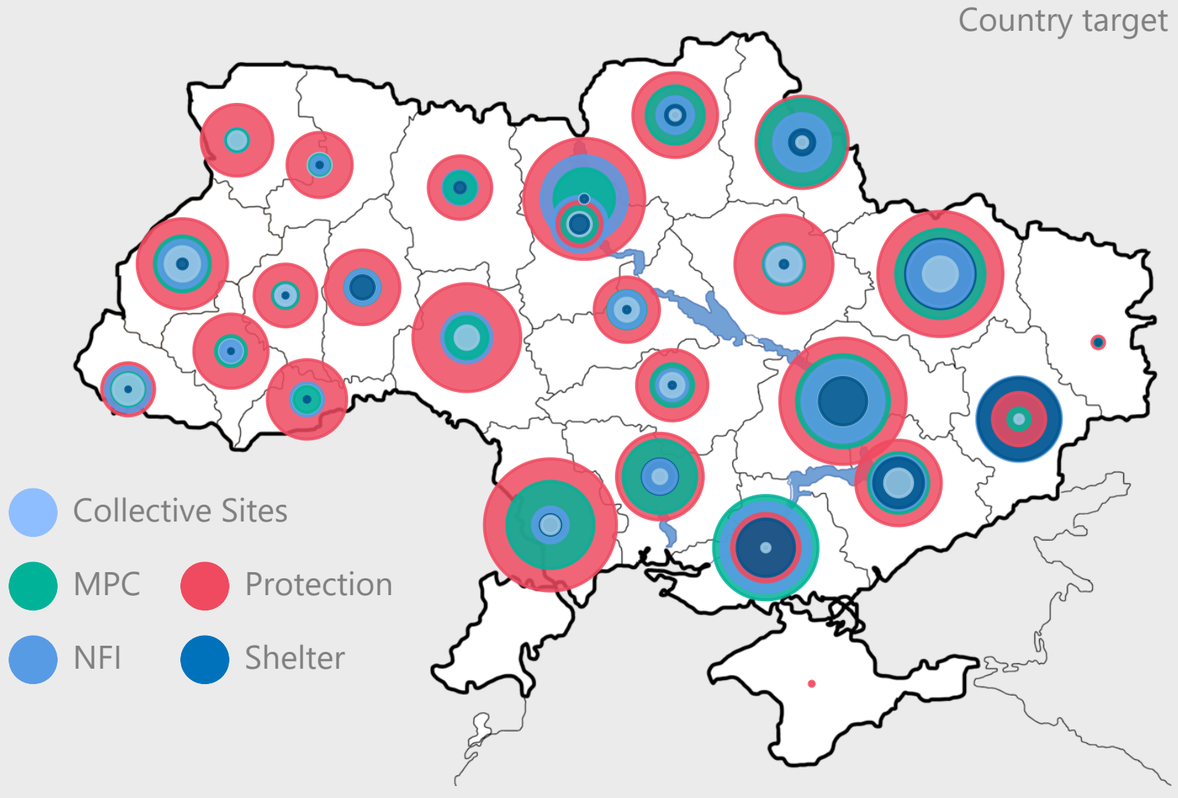
11.1M people targeted for humanitarian assistance in the Humanitarian Response Plan

3.6M people aimed to be reached with **4.6M services** in 2023, some of whom will receive several forms of support

People Reached in 2023

2,625,284





UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

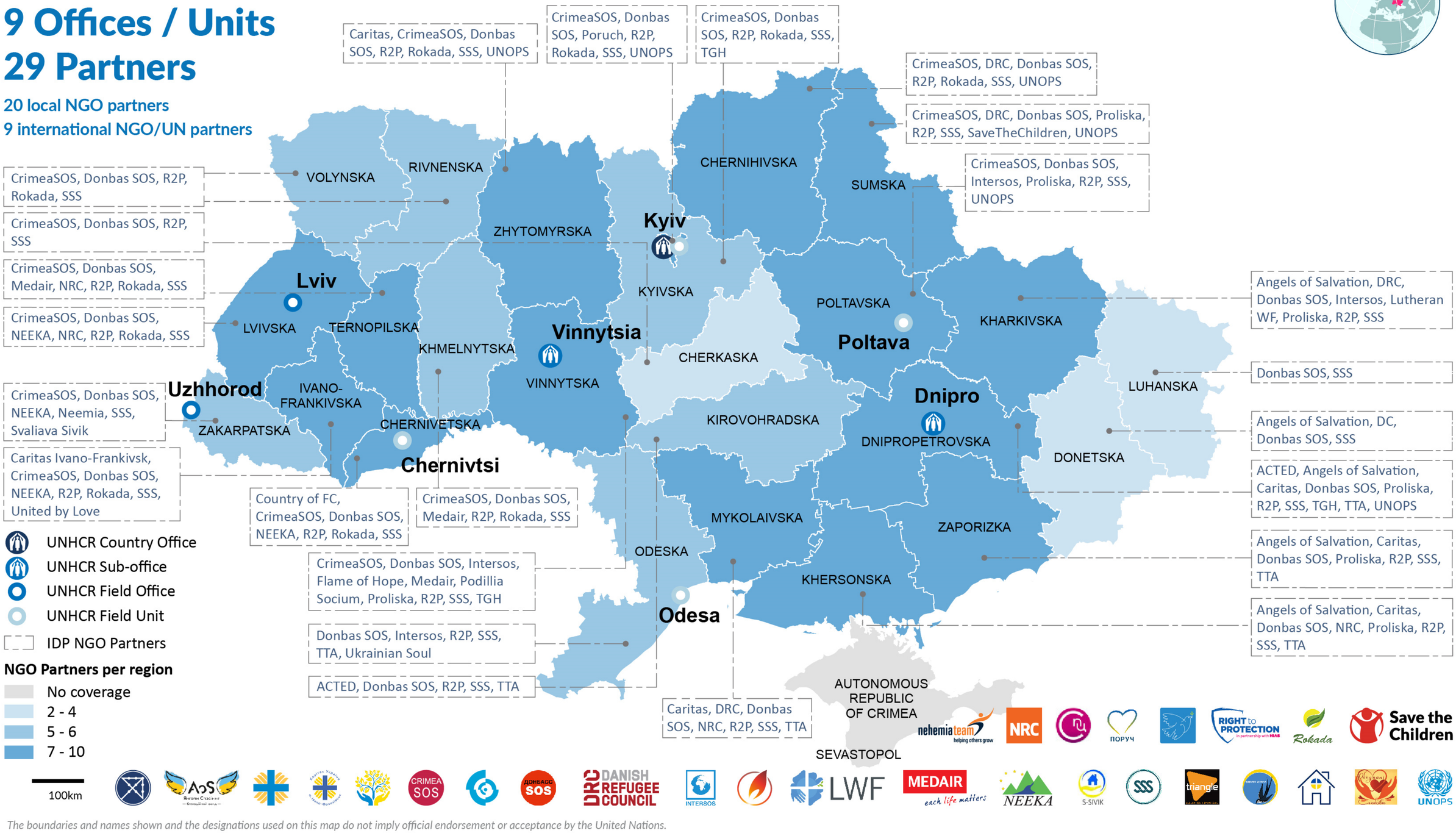
UKRAINE

UNHCR Presence and Coverage

as of 09 Oct 2023

9 Offices / Units
29 Partners

20 local NGO partners
9 international NGO/UN partners



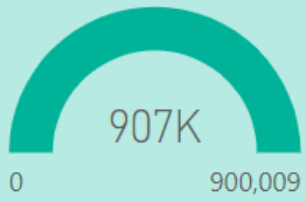
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Date: 09 Oct 2023 **Source:** UNHCR **Author:** UNHCR - Kyiv **Feedback:** stovpovy@unhcr.org **Filename:** Presence and Coverage ENG

WINTERIZATION RESPONSE

The winterization response remains one of UNHCR's priorities. *In coordination with the Government of Ukraine, and contributing to the broader Ukraine Winter Response Plan (updated September 2023), UNHCR's winterization response is targeting* ***900,000 vulnerable, displaced and war-affected people*** *between 1 September 2023 and 29 February 2024.* ***Strengthened protection referrals****, with a particular focus on psychosocial support and legal assistance to support access to key civil and housing, land and property documentation to support solutions from the start, accompany UNHCR's winterization response.*

906,684
People assisted as part of the Winterization Response Plan



Winterization Response Plan

One-off winter cash payment
617,926 — Reached with cash support for winter energy needs
137% — 450K Targeted

NFI
248,775 — Reached with essential & winterized items such as quilts, thermoses and clothes
60% — 416K Targeted

Shelter/Housing
11,809 — Received heaters, Rapid Thermal Kits (RTKs) or cash for rent
75% — 16K Targeted

Collective sites
28,174 — Benefitted from care & maintenance services in collective sites to ensure readiness for winter
157% — 18K Targeted

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

- As of end-December, almost **907,000** people in Ukraine had received winterization assistance through UNHCR and partners. This includes cash assistance consisting of UAH 6,660 to over **617,900** people with specific vulnerabilities to help them cover increased costs during the winter months.
- Almost **249,000** people received essential and winterized items such as high-thermal blankets and quilts, including over **77,000** people who received winter clothing.
- Over **11,800** people were supported with winterized shelter and housing assistance. This includes almost **8,500** people who received a rapid thermal kit to help them stay warm in their homes. This kit includes items traditionally used by people in Ukraine to improve home insulation such as reflective insulation screens, transparent plastic sheets for window repairs, foam draft blocker and building tape. Meanwhile, in close coordination with the authorities, the distribution of generators to communities continues, with over 80 out of a planned 147 generators distributed so far. This support will help people and communities be prepared in case of power outages to stay warm.
- To support displaced people staying at collective sites across the country, UNHCR also helped repair and insulate the premises as well as helped maintain heating and electrical systems. This support helped improve living conditions for almost **28,200** displaced people in collective sites.

© UNHCR/Viktoriia Tiutiunnyk

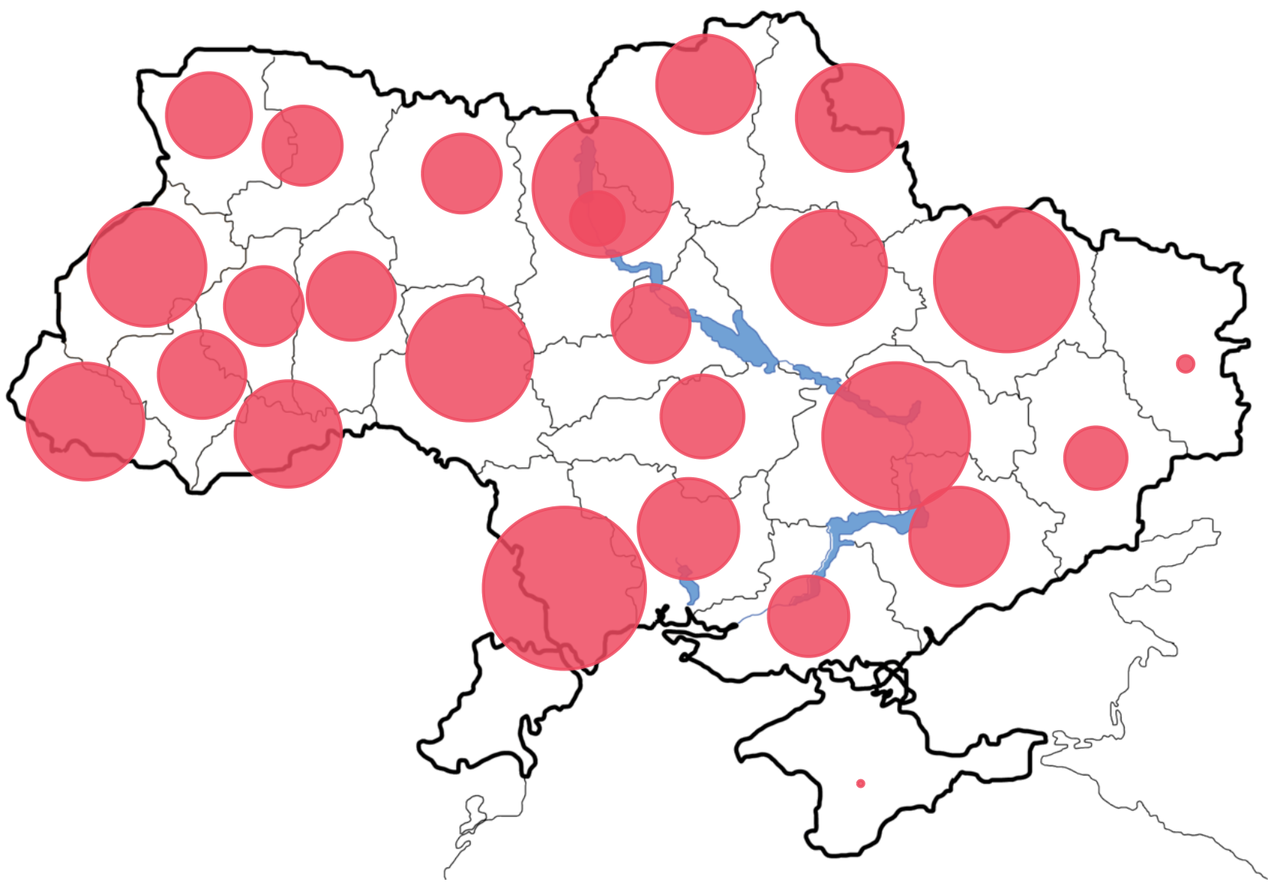
Elina's story of displacement started in 2016, when she fled from Donetsk in east Ukraine together with her son Mykyta, amidst the armed conflict. The need to take care of a family member with a disability forced them to return. Then, with the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, Elina and Mykyta became internally displaced again. Being a single parent, Elina also takes care of her elderly mother who fled with them. After leaving Donetsk, the family had to rebuild their life in Dnipro where they found temporary shelter in a modular house.

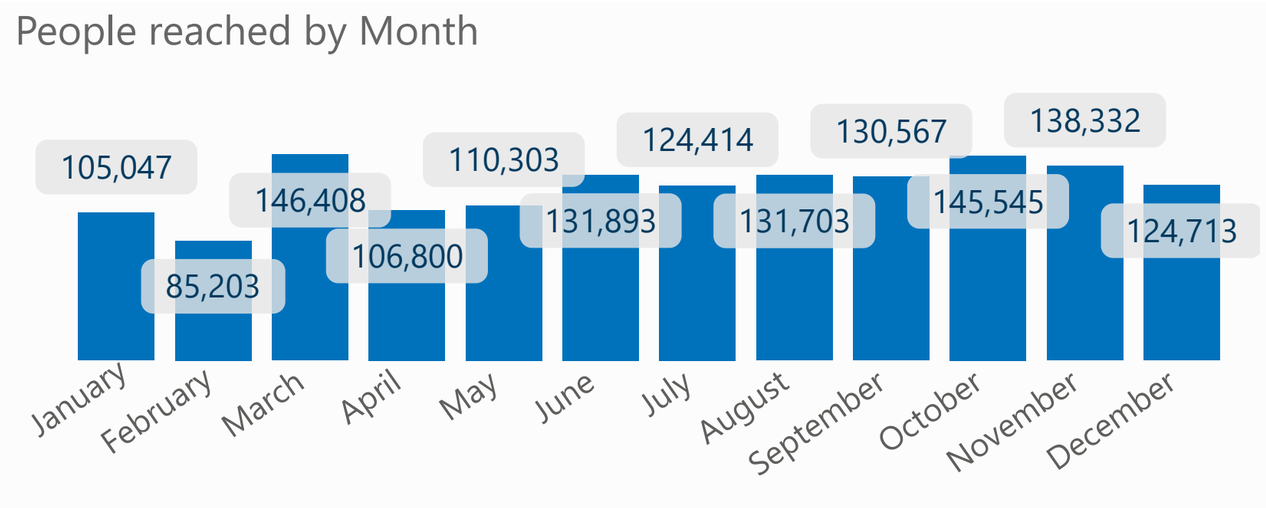
While struggling to make ends meet, Elina was unable to access the state allowance for internally displaced people as the document certifying her situation as an IDP was outdated. Thanks to the free legal assistance provided by UNHCR's NGO partner Right to Protection, Elina was able to renew her documents and receive the payments again. The family also received cash assistance from UNHCR to help cover basic needs, like food and medicines, and the additional costs for heating and utilities that significantly increase during winter. Read more here.

Protection services

A largescale missile attack on 29 December left dozens of civilians killed and injured across Ukraine. UNHCR and partners were quickly on site to support affected families with psychosocial support and legal counselling. © Rokada

UNHCR's protection programmes are designed to complement or reinforce the capacity of the national system and local protection services and are centred on 4 objectives: (i) ensuring access to social, legal and other protection services; (ii) strengthening access to information, complaints and feedback mechanism and participation in decisions and solutions; (iii) strengthening national legal and policy frameworks; and (iv) promoting rights-based solutions.





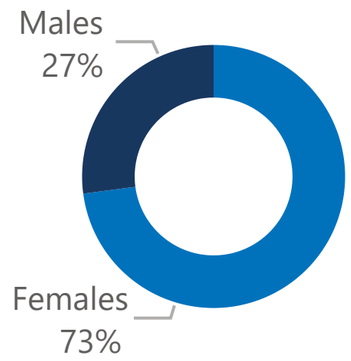
PROTECTION: KEY FIGURES

1,480,928 Reached as of December 2023

102,128
Individuals receiving PSS/PFA

180,152
Legal consultations provided

3,739
Persons received targeted GBV services



32,515
Individuals supported with case management services

5,567
Supported with other protection services

Highlights:

- **16 Days of Activism:** As part of the *16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (GBV)* (25 November-10 December), UNHCR and partners conducted 120 activities reaching 4,500 people. These included the organization with UNFPA of a *GBV Prevention and Response Forum* in Dnipropetrovska oblast in east Ukraine that mobilized local, national, women-led, and displaced groups to discuss existing challenges, solutions, and experiences to tackling GBV in the community; a street exhibition in Zakarpatska oblast in west Ukraine in partnership with UNHCR's local partner Neemia that highlighted the role of national police, local organizations, and state and private actors responding to the needs of survivors in the oblast; and the installation of red benches symbolizing "No violence!" in Odeska, Poltavska and Vinnytska oblasts, in coordination with local authorities and partners. The Red Bench is an international symbol and project aiming at creating awareness of GBV prevention and response and bringing together women survivors.
- **UNHCR and UNDP supported a Human Rights Conference** organized by the Office of the Ombudsperson, Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the theme of "Freedom or Fear" and focused on difficult choices that might need to be made to defend human rights. The conference was attended by 250 participants representing central state authorities, major donor countries, UN agencies, civil society organizations and state authorities.
- **UNHCR procured and donated over 900 digital learning devices** to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoES). The MoES will distribute the digital learning devices to children from affected communities in Dontesk, Kherson and Lukansk who have been forcibly displaced to other regions in Ukraine. Children who will benefit from these devices have chosen to continue their education online from the schools from their communities of origin. These children are either unable to attend offline education due to frequent shelling, an absence of shelters, or their local schools do not have the capacities to provide education to the high number of children in need.

Cash assistance

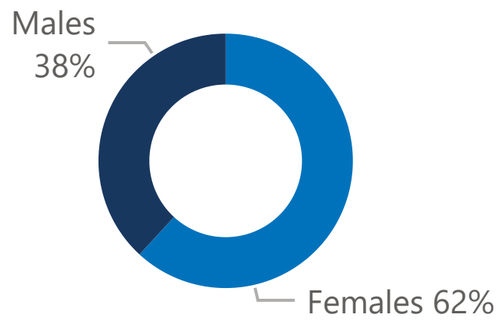
People affected by a missile attack on Kyiv on 13 December register to receive cash assistance through UNHCR's local NGO partner Right to Protection. © Right to Protection

CASH ASSISTANCE: KEY FIGURES

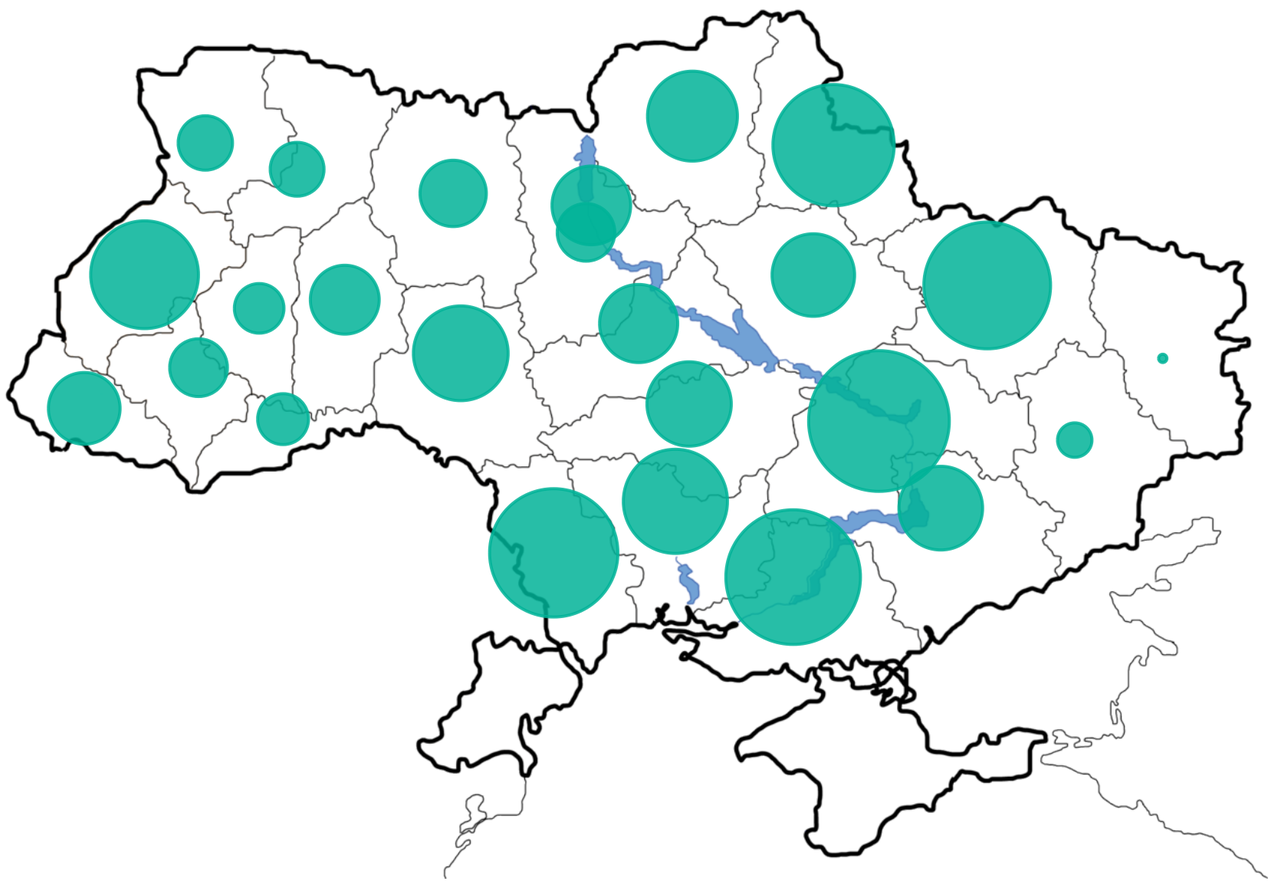
899,039 Reached as of December 2023

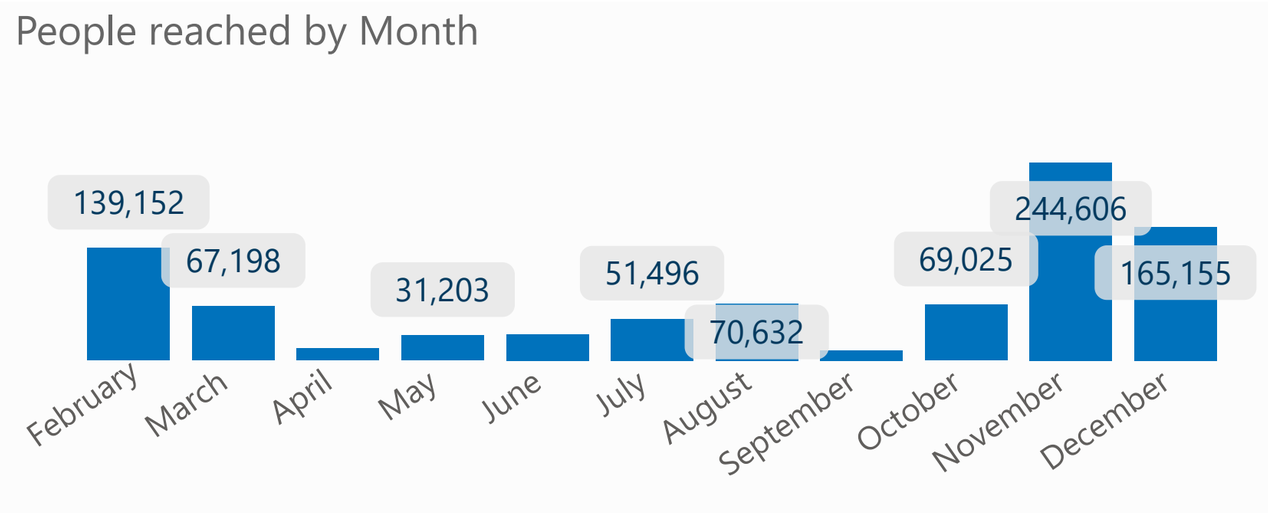
$223.6M
disbursed so far to assist IDPs and war-affected people

18
oblasts with active cash enrolment through centres and/or mobile teams with combined protection screening and services



Cash assistance remains one of the most optimal means and most requested forms of support among IDPs and other war-affected people. UNHCR is implementing a multi-purpose cash assistance programme that is aligned with the national social assistance programme, enabling vulnerable war-affected, and displaced people and returnees to cover immediate basic needs, in line with the memorandum of understanding signed with the Ministry of Social Policy in April 2022.

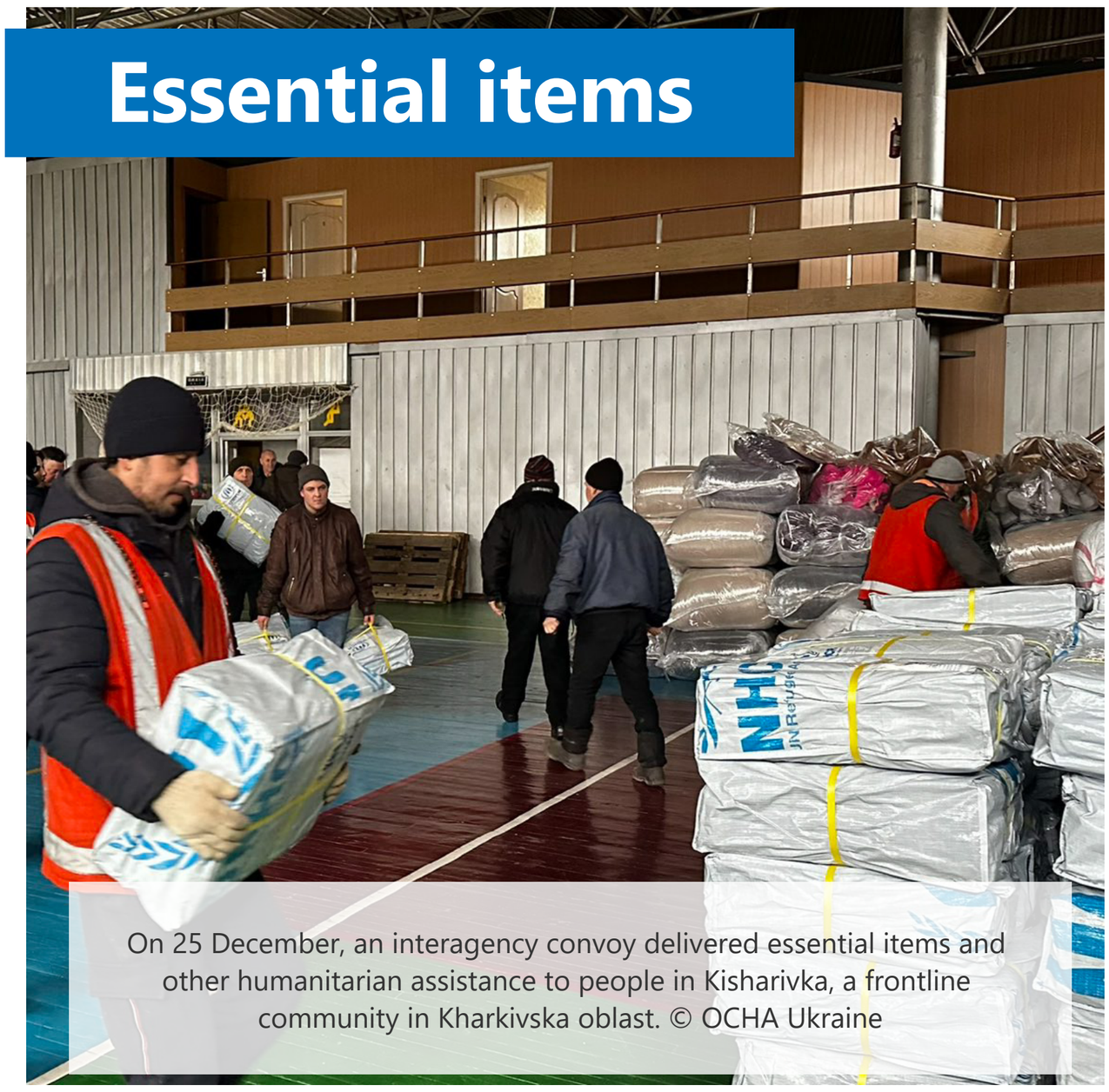




Highlights:

- In total in 2023, UNHCR distributed multi-purpose cash assistance to **899,039** war-affected and internally displaced families, returnees, and people with specific vulnerabilities to help cover the costs of basic items like food, medicines, clothes, accommodation and utilities, as well as to cover winter energy needs. This includes **565,236** people who have benefited from a three-month multi-purpose cash assistance payment, as well as **617,926** people who received cash support to help cover additional costs associated with winter. The latter includes a significant number of families with specific vulnerabilities who benefited from both programmes. Over **$223.6 million** has been disbursed this year to assist internally displaced and other war-affected people through multi-purpose cash assistance and cash for winter energy needs.
- UNHCR signed a **Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Social Policy** of Ukraine and the **Pension Fund of Ukraine** to provide additional support to the Ukrainian population during the 2023-2024 winter season. Under the Memorandum, UNHCR will provide cash assistance to purchase solid fuel to over 85,000 families with specific vulnerabilities, including elderly-headed households and families with people with disabilities.
- In December, UNHCR also provided cash assistance to **120** refugee families remaining in Ukraine to help cover their basic needs and rent.

Essential items



On 25 December, an interagency convoy delivered essential items and other humanitarian assistance to people in Kisharivka, a frontline community in Kharkivska oblast. © OCHA Ukraine

NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFIs): KEY FIGURES

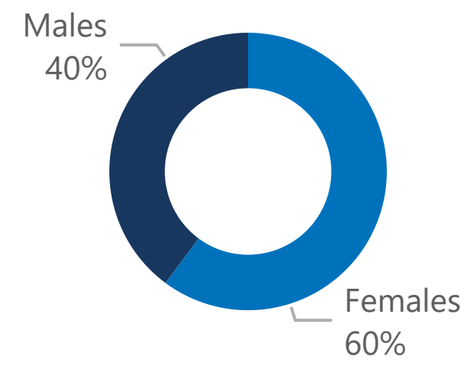
575,273 Reached as of December 2023

476,297
Individuals receiving standard NFIs

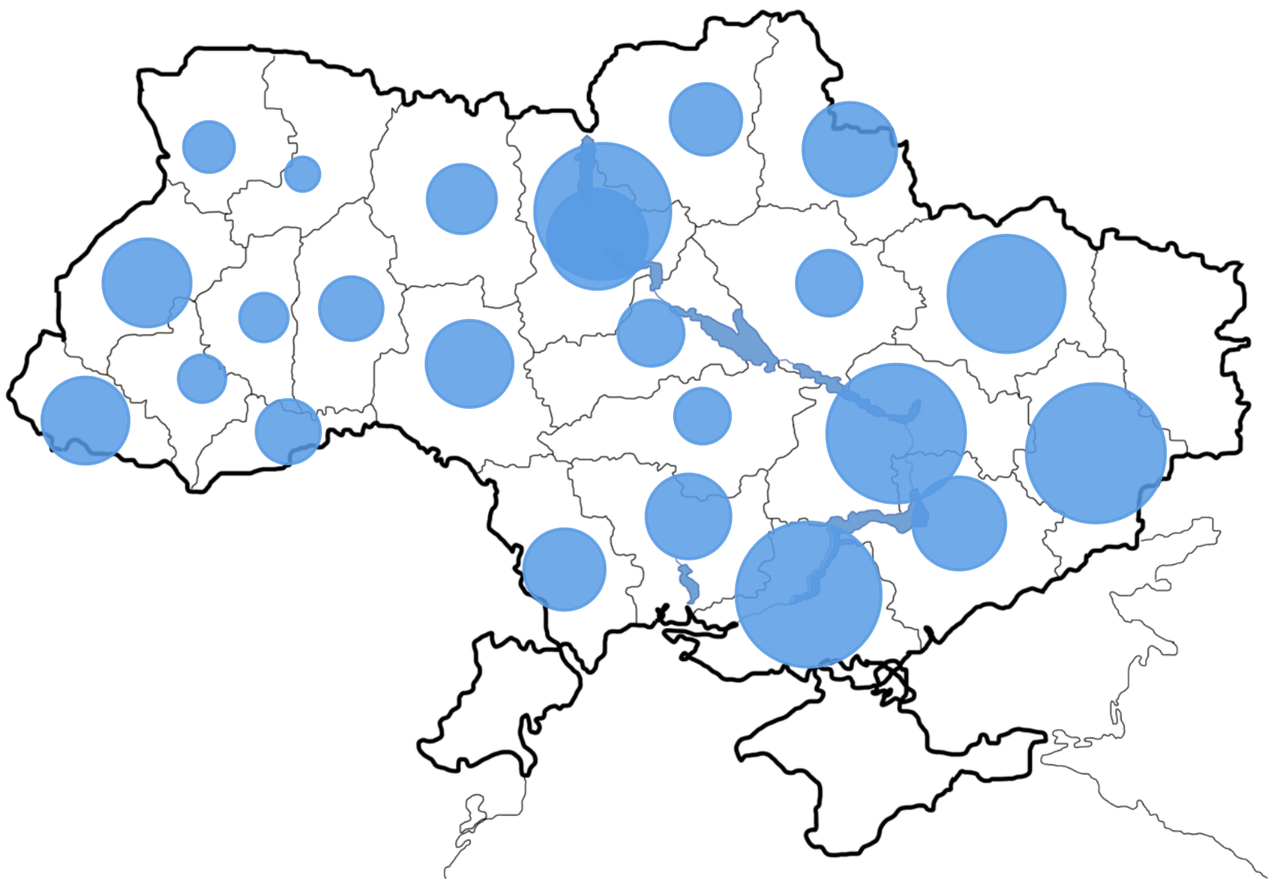
374,778
Individuals receiving hygiene kits

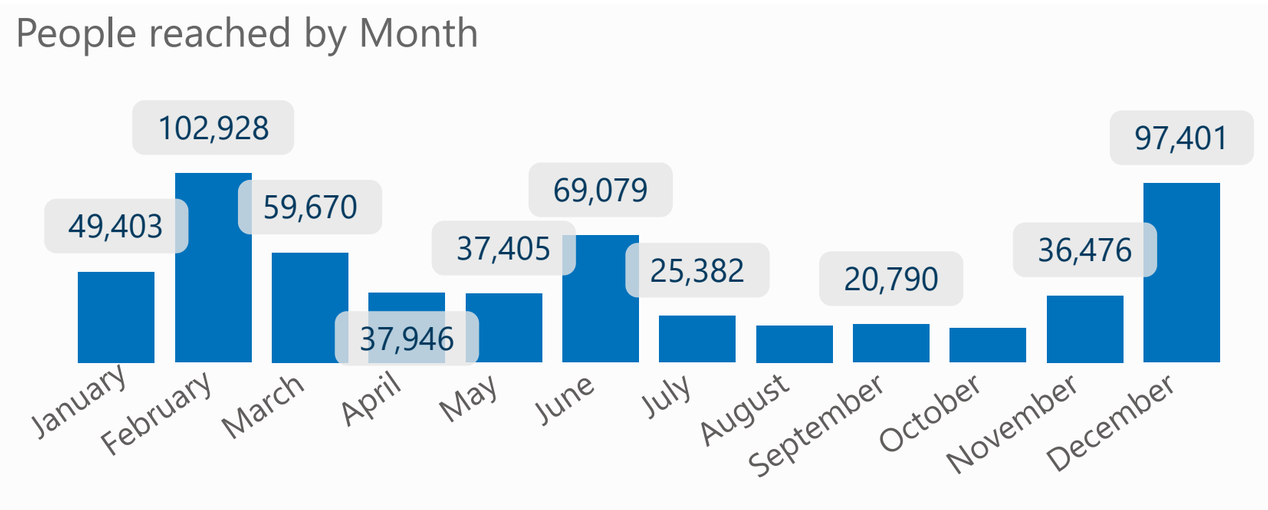
216,846
Individuals receiving other items

263,617
Individuals receiving non-standard NFIs



UNHCR distributes standard relief items, such as blankets, kitchen sets and solar lamps, and non-standard items such as dignity kits, mattresses, and clothes to people in need, mainly in areas along the front line and to newly displaced people, as well as to people living in newly accessible areas who have endured months of constant shelling. NFI distribution is done through implementing partners, local administrations, direct distribution, or contribution to inter-agency responses.

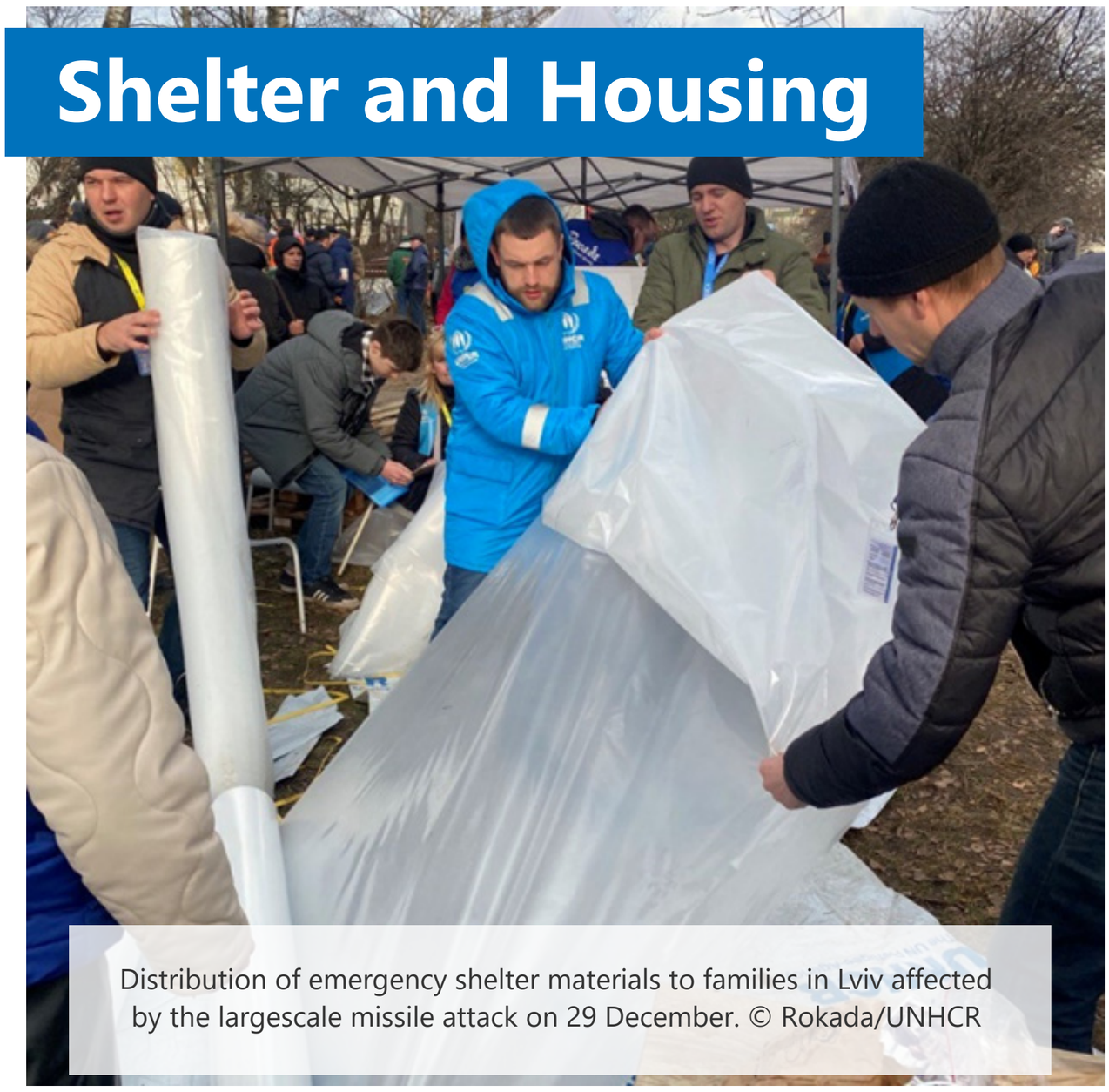




Highlights:

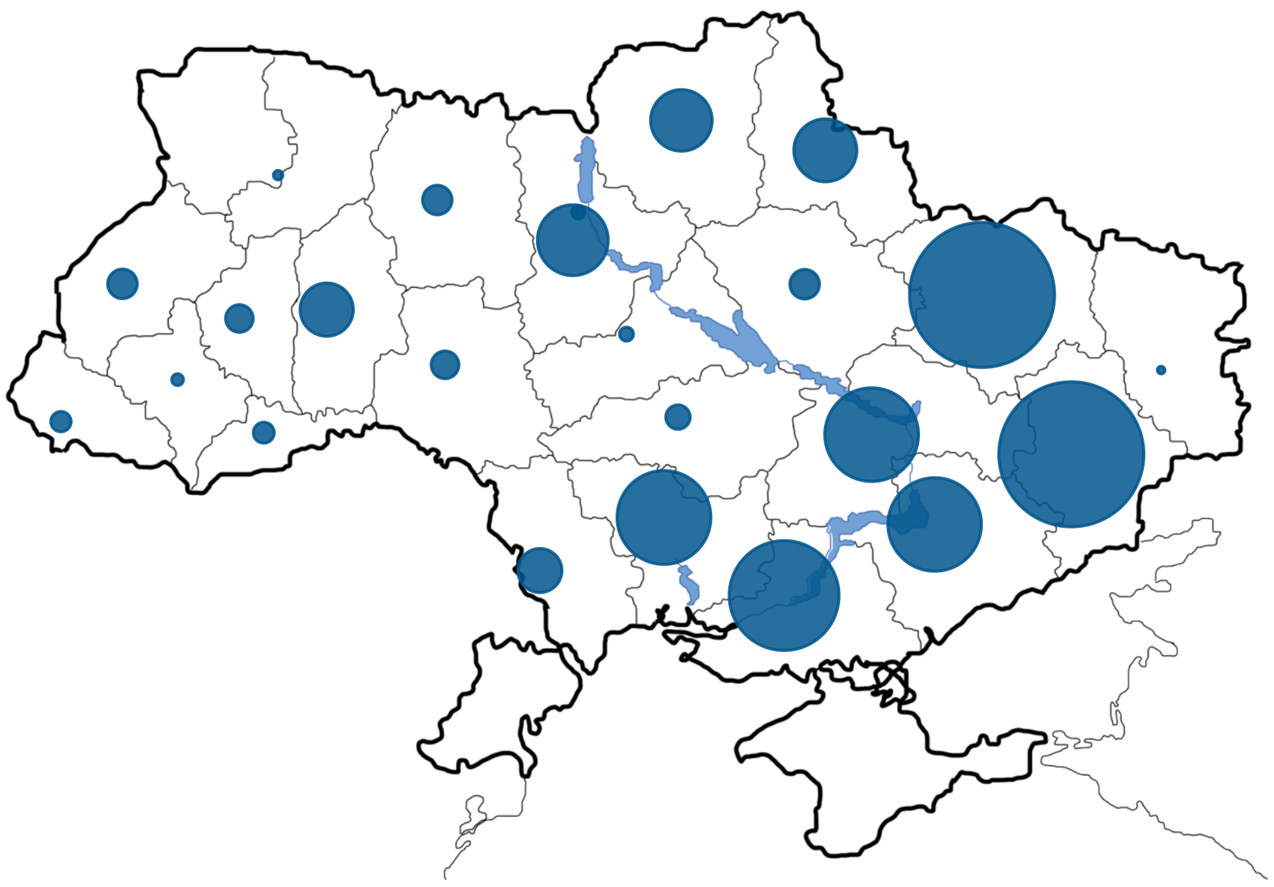
- **Helping war-affected families living close to the frontline meet their basic needs remains a priority.** UNHCR contributed essential items such as tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, blankets, solar lamps and bed linen sets to **six interagency convoys** in December, including three to Donetska oblast, two to Khersonska oblast and one to Kharkivska oblast. In total through these six convoys, UNHCR contributed 3,120 pieces of tarpaulin, 1,374 solar lamps, 30 rolls of plastic sheeting, 300 blankets, 300 bed linen sets, 1,500 sleeping bags, and clothes. These items will help families in frontline communities, including people with specific vulnerabilities and people with mobility issues, to stay warm this winter.
- In total this year, over **575,270** displaced and war-affected people were supported with essential items, including people affected by new attacks across the country and people living in areas that are hard to access near the frontline.

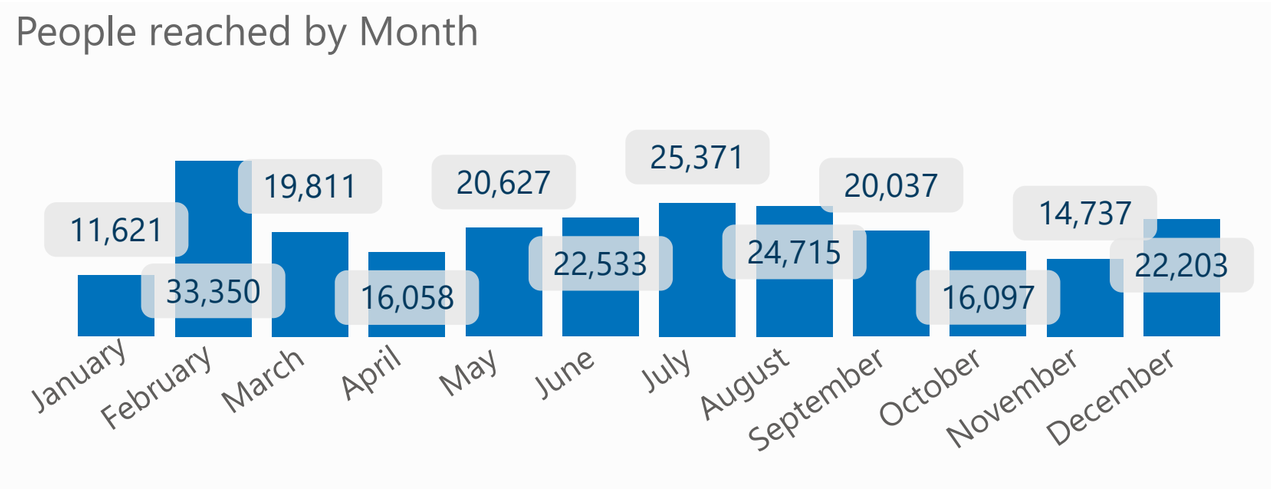
Shelter and Housing



Distribution of emergency shelter materials to families in Lviv affected by the largescale missile attack on 29 December. © Rokada/UNHCR

UNHCR's shelter and housing programme supports people impacted by the war through three activities: (i) emergency shelter for those with immediate needs in areas directly impacted by shelling and attacks (ii) repairs and housing solutions that can help people return to their homes, where possible and (iii) improvement or creation of accommodation in collective sites for IDPs who cannot live at home.





EMERGENCY SHELTER AND HOUSING: KEY FIGURES

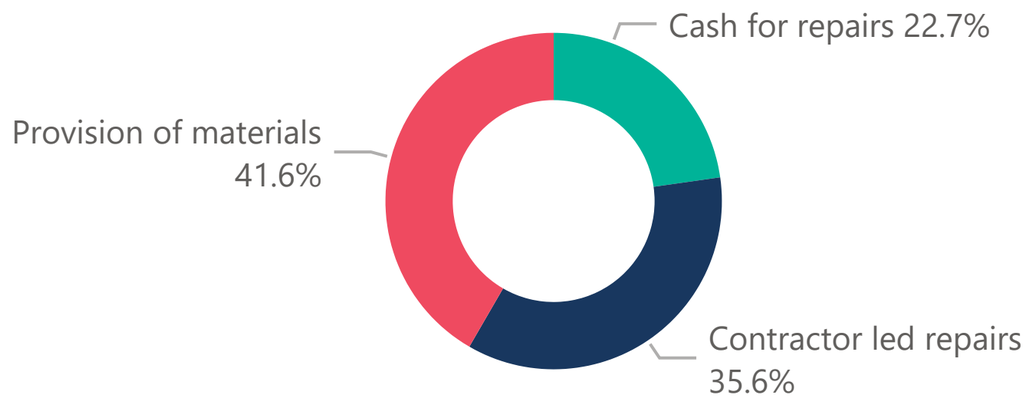
247,160 Reached as of December 2023

172,483 Individuals / 83,737 Households supported by ESKs

59,451 Individuals / 22,221 Households benefitting from repairs

11,198 Sleeping spaces created/improved

Beneficiaries of repairs by modality



Highlights:

- **Rental Market Initiatives:** As of 31 December, UNHCR and partners enrolled more than 1,100 families into the Rental Market Initiatives programme to secure alternative and durable accommodation for displaced families for a minimum period of six months. The displaced families were in the process of receiving the second tranche of payment to cover for rental fees and utilities until the end of the winter period (inclusive of March 2024). The programme was successfully piloted by six partners in nine oblasts in the western and central regions of Ukraine.
- **Emergency response:** On 29 December, a massive Russian missile attack caused significant damage to multi-storey residential buildings, private households, and critical civil infrastructure across Ukraine. Partners immediately responded to the needs of people affected by the attacks, as UNHCR mobilized stocks of emergency shelter materials prepositioned at partner warehouses and immediately arranged transportation of additional emergency shelter kits and materials within 24 hours of the attack. In **Lviv**, west Ukraine, our local partner Rokada supported almost 270 families within one day of the attack by providing plastic sheeting and tarpaulins so that they could cover damaged parts of their homes. In **Kharkiv**, east Ukraine, our local partner Proliska supported families in heavily shelled residential areas by distributing over 2,000 OSB sheets (wooden boards) within 48 hours of the attack, allowing families to promptly close their windows, which is extremely important during winter. In **Odesa**, south Ukraine, our partner The Tenth of April quickly provided support to over 25 families on 29-30 December by providing emergency shelter kits and plastic sheeting.

Collective sites

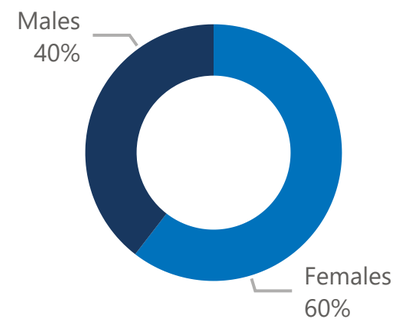
UNHCR's partner Proliska, together with national police officers, organized an awareness-raising session on the prevention of GBV for the residents of a collective site in Dnipro. © Proliska/UNHCR

COLLECTIVE SITES: KEY FIGURES

99,008 Reached as of December 2023

8,777
Site assessments conducted & recorded

99,008
People residing at sites supported with CCCM services



11,338
Individuals trained

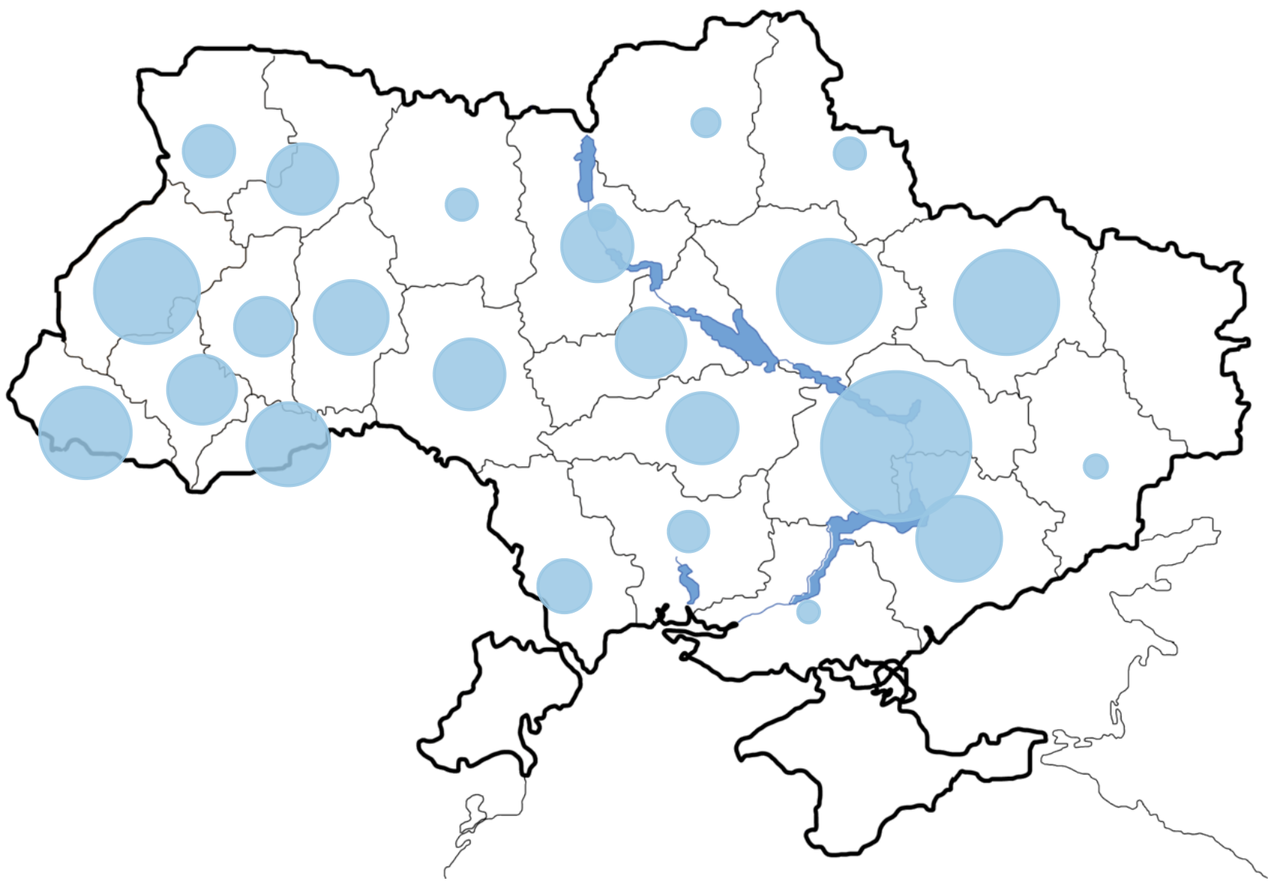
24,041
Individuals participated in awareness raising sessions

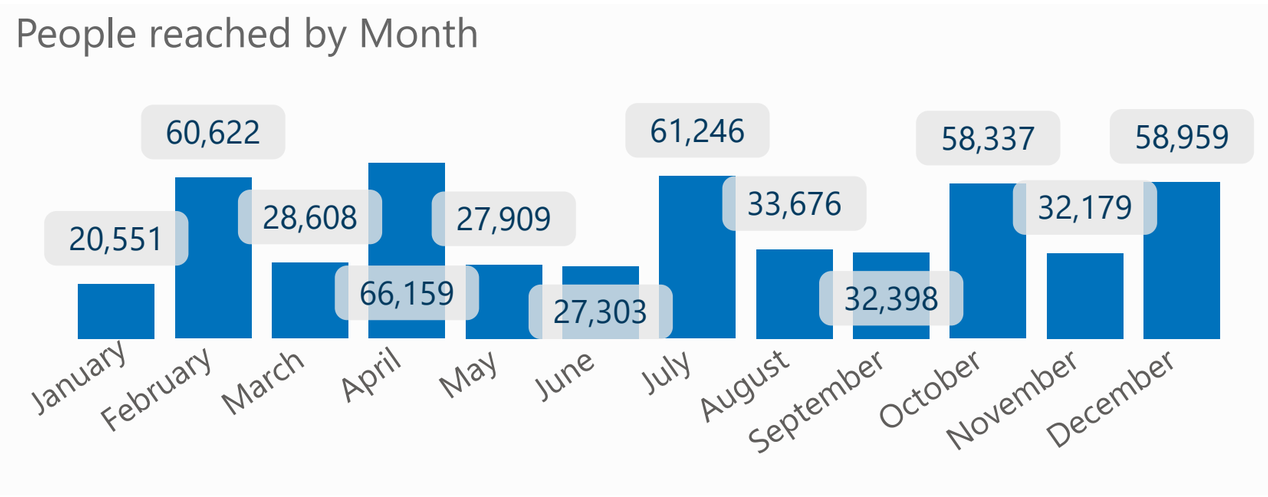
93,497
Individuals benefitting from care and maintenance and community-led activities

UNHCR provides support to the management of collective sites to ensure protection services are accessible, inclusive, and community-based and works to improve the quality of life and dignity of IDPs during displacement. As part of the CCCM response, conditions and needs in collective sites will be closely monitored. Socio-economically or otherwise vulnerable IDPs are likely to remain in collective sites until they consider their area of origin is safe for return, and they will have access to basic services there.

Highlights:

- **Capacity building:** In December, collective site coordination and management (CCCM) teams focused on capacity building for site managers on topics related to legal frameworks, including site registration under Resolution #930 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, site management, and alignment with the minimum living standards.
- **Winterization:** The most frequently reported needs in collective sites in December related to keeping living spaces warm, access to hot water, insulation of site premises, and improvement of electrical systems which often come under increased strain during winter. To address these needs, CCCM mobile teams provided care and maintenance interventions such as installing water boilers, partially replacing and renovating electrical wiring systems, and carrying out small-scale refurbishment works of bathroom facilities and plumbing services.





Durable solutions, recovery & development nexus

The "IdeaThon" event in Mukachevo, supported by UNHCR and UNDP, mobilized communities and brought together ideas for promising projects promoting the inclusion of displaced people in host communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Coordination:** UNHCR, in its role as the co-chair of the Community Planning for Durable Solutions and Recovery Working Group, continued to facilitate interagency discussions regarding the establishment of area-based coordination and programming. These efforts resulted in a comprehensive mapping of agencies' presence and the identification of lead and co-lead agencies across the pilot locations selected to initiate area-based coordination and programming in 2024. Following the recommendations from the November workshop with Government counterparts, a roadmap for 2024 has been developed outlining key milestones and providing guidance to initiate engagement across 12 hromadas for the development of local recovery plans and the identification of durable solutions and recovery programming.
- **Social cohesion:** On 15 December, UNHCR, in collaboration with the main Department of National Social Services, our local partner Rokada, and local NGOs, inaugurated the Centre for the Provision of Social Services for IDPs ("Integration Space") in Rivne, western Ukraine. This project aims to help displaced and war-affected people to access services, including psychosocial support, legal aid, and livelihood activities including support to relocated businesses. As part of UNHCR's area-based programming for durable solutions, the centre underwent rehabilitation to cater to the needs of people with disabilities. Additional repairs are planned in 2024 to create more working spaces.

Coordination

Under an agreement signed with the Ministry of Reintegration, UNHCR will provide compensation to owners hosting displaced families in their homes. © UNHCR/Iryna Tymchyshyn

HIGHLIGHTS

- **On 19 December, the Ministry of Reintegration and UNHCR signed an agreement on the implementation of the Prykhystok programme**, the largest national social initiative supporting free housing for displaced people in Ukraine. Under the terms of the agreement, UNHCR will provide $10 million towards financial compensation to house owners who are hosting internally displaced people in their homes. UNHCR already supported around 40,000 families under the Prykhystok programme in 2022, and given the programme's critical importance, will continue supporting it in 2024.

Clusters

UNHCR's humanitarian response is based on the needs and priorities set out in the 2023 Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan and in the 2023-2024 UN Transitional Framework. In addition to leading the **Protection, Shelter and Non-Food Item (NFI), and Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters**, UNHCR co-leads the Durable Solutions Steering Group with IOM, OCHA and UNDP, and currently co-chairs the Community Planning for Durable Solutions and Recovery Working Group. UNHCR also leads the Legal Aid Task Force under the national Protection Cluster, co-leads the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Task Force with OCHA, and is a member of the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Working Group.

PROTECTION CLUSTER

- **Emergency response**: Protection Cluster partners responded to the needs of people affected by the recent wave of intensified strikes and hostilities in Dnipropetrovska, Kharkivska, Khmelnytska, Kyivska, Odeska, and Sumska oblasts providing psychosocial support and immediate legal assistance to survivors of the attacks. Partners worked to ensure protection is mainstreamed through risk mitigation and inclusion, and to refer the most vulnerable people to specialized services.
- **Protection Response in 2023:** Over 130 Protection Cluster partners continued to deliver protection services and assistance to displaced people, non-displaced people affected by the war, and returnees. Over 7 million people were reached with services or activities through partners, including psychosocial support, awareness raising, counselling, legal assistance, referrals to specialized services, individual protection assistance and community-based protection. The highest numbers of people reached were reported in Dnipropetrovska and Kharkivska oblasts in east Ukraine.

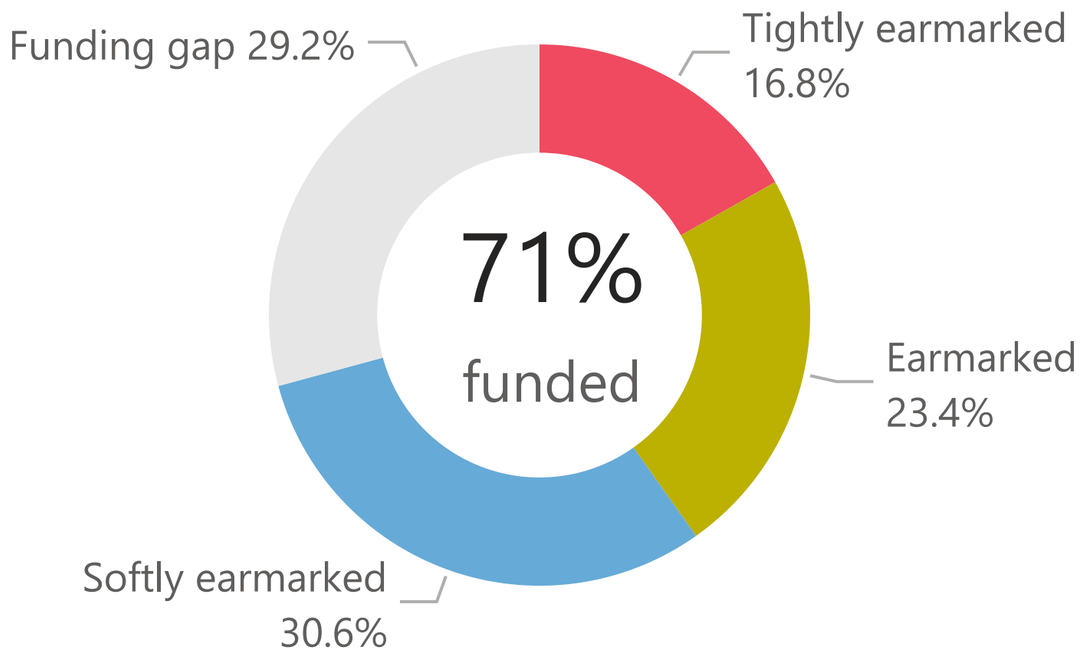
SHELTER & NFI CLUSTER

- **SNFI response:** In December, the Shelter Cluster continued its vital role in providing emergency shelter assistance to people affected by the war, particularly those near the frontline. Over 5,800 emergency shelter kits were distributed, offering immediate protection and support. This critical response was accompanied by the distribution of NFI kits, including 194,000 NFIs and 12,580 non-standard items (such as such as refrigerators, cookers, and washing machines, for example). Support was extended to 38,360 households for light and medium housing repairs. Rental support initiatives also made a notable impact, helping 1,658 people in securing stable living conditions.
- **Winterization:** A key focus for the month was winterization assistance, providing crucial support to 25,820 people to help them cover their winter energy needs. Partners also distributed 2,086 winter appliances and 5,961 winter clothing items, ensuring that the affected communities were better equipped to cope with the harsh winter conditions.
- **Emergency response:** In response to the intensified strikes, the Shelter Cluster provided emergency assistance across all four hubs. Special attention was given to coordination and rapid emergency response, especially crucial due to the extremely cold weather conditions.
- **Capacity-building:** The Cluster organized a series of capacity-building sessions in Dnipro for Eastern hub partners. Over 50 representatives from local authorities, partner organizations, and coordination bodies participated, gaining a deeper understanding of the humanitarian coordination structure.

CCCM CLUSTER

- **Solutions**: On 12-13 December, the CCCM Cluster together with REACH Initiative, held a workshop on "Durable Solutions for People Living in Collective Sites: Priorities for 2024". The workshop brought together key experts from the humanitarian and development sector to discuss and agree on evidence-based recommendations and advocacy messages to support identifying and linking to more durable solutions for people living in collective sites. The outcomes of the workshop are being integrated into the final 2024 CCCM Cluster Strategy.
- **GBV risk mitigation:** The CCCM and Protection Clusters held a joint discussion on the way forward for 2024 to scale up gender-based violence (GBV) risk mitigation in collective sites. Agreed action points will be prioritized in 2024.
- **Evacuations:** Following the Government's announcement of mandatory evacuations in Kharkivska oblast, the CCCM Cluster in the East Hub has been supporting preparedness measures for hosting newly evacuated families and individuals in designated collective sites. The Cluster has been coordinating with site managers in the respective collective sites and the main transit centre. Identified needs have mainly included NFIs, and partners have been identified to cover the needs.

Financial updates



$602.5M

UNHCR's financial requirements 2023

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this emergency as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with softly earmarked and unearmarked funds

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Publications

- Ukraine Situation Winterization Plan 2023-2024
- Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees and IDPs from Ukraine #4
- Ukraine Situation: Supporting an area-based approach to durable solutions
- Ukraine Position on Voluntary Return to Ukraine - June 2023

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