

Facts & figures

More than 5 million people in Ukraine affected by the conflict

Around 1.5 million registered internally displaced persons in Ukraine

Over 1.1 million registered refugees from Ukraine in neighbouring countries
(Sources: OCHA, UNHCR)

SDC/HA engagement 2015 - 2019

Direct emergency assistance in the areas of drinking water and healthcare
12'000 tonnes of relief supplies delivered in total

Support in the form of funding and personnel for multilateral organisations (ICRC, UN/OCHA and UNICEF)

Total SDC budget 2014 - 2019
CHF 21,5 million

SDC in Ukraine

See: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/ukraine/en/home/representations/cooperation-office.html>



Since April 2015, Swiss Humanitarian Aid has organised ten convoys carrying water treatment materials, medicines and medical equipment to eastern Ukraine. © SDC

Swiss humanitarian aid to eastern Ukraine

In the conflict-affected area of Eastern Ukraine Switzerland continues to be committed to and promote the respect for humanitarian principles- humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence and to provide direct assistance. With its eleventh humanitarian transport, Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC/HA) convoy in December 2019 once more delivered humanitarian goods to the affected population on both sides of the “line of contact” in eastern Ukraine. Switzerland remains the only governmental actor to support people living on both sides through direct action.

In June 2019, Switzerland organized another delivery of 2,500 tonnes of relief supplies with a total value of CHF 2,7 million to eastern Ukraine. 130 trucks with medical supplies and chemicals for drinking water treatment were sent to partners on both sides of the contact line. Thanks to the replacement of medical devices and the provision of urgently needed spare parts and consumables to 9 hospitals, the conflict-affected populations will have improved access to life-saving treatment. Furthermore, through the supply of chemicals, Donetsk water utility Vodadonbasa, can provide sufficient quantities of drinking water of adequate quality to up to 4 million people in the whole region of Donetsk, i.e. on both sides of the “line of contact” for another year. In December 2019 a special transport brought two electrolysis devices to Donetsk NGCA, which will produce locally and safely enough disinfectants for 700'000 people.

Between April 2015 and October 2018, Switzerland, with the support of the central government in Kyiv and interlocutors in the NGCA, had already sent nine humanitarian transports with 9'500 tonnes of relief supplies in total to the conflict zone.

Background

The armed conflict in Ukraine has entered its sixth year. The lack of a political solution means that insecurity, humanitarian and protection needs will continue. As of end of 2018, at least 13'000 people were killed. Approximately 600,000 people still live in harsh conditions within a distance of 5km or less from the "line of contact", where shelling can occur at any moment. The conditions for another 1.7 million people living in non-government-controlled areas (NGCA) are similarly difficult.

Switzerland's response to the humanitarian crisis

Since 2014, Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC/HA) has allocated a total budget of CHF 21,5 million in response to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The focus of the Humanitarian Assistance of Switzerland lies on the following three fields of intervention: 1) Support to humanitarian response and coordination on the ground, through secondments and financial contributions to UN agencies (OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR) and the ICRC, 2) direct operations in the fields of healthcare and drinking water and 3) protection activities through contributions to partner organisations.

Advocacy for the most vulnerable is at the core of the Swiss engagement: Switzerland continues to promote the recognition of the humanitarian principles- humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. According to needs on the ground, Swiss funds are allocated based on a ratio of one third to two-thirds between the government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas.

Switzerland's direct operations

Despite the conflict, the Vodadonbasa waterworks in Donetsk – one of the largest of its kind in Europe- has continued to supply with drinking water the entire population of its catchment area, i.e. on both sides of the "line of contact" approximately 4 Mio. inhabitants in total. Switzerland started its support to Vodadonbasa in spring 2015, when poor water quality in the Donetsk region caused an increase in hepatitis A infections requiring a rapid response. In view of the difficult access for most NGOs to people in need in the NGCA, SDC/HA then decided to carry out its activities in the fields of drinking water and healthcare in the form of direct operations. Hereafter SDC/ HA, has organized nine humanitarian transports on road and rail with water treatment materials and medical supplies to the conflict affected population on both sides of the "line of contact".

With the 10th and 11th transports, Switzerland provided chemicals in sufficient quantity to produce safe drinking water for the whole population in the catchment area for a fourth year and to and helps to improve basic primary health care capacities. Medical equipment were delivered to nine hospitals in Donetsk and Lugansk regions. Thanks to the Swiss support, in the TB lab/dispensary in Luhansk, which was partially destroyed by shelling at the beginning of the conflict, is enabled to continue conducting the rapid diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB) could be resumed thus reducing the risk of a spreading of multi-resistant TB in the wider region.

As with all Swiss humanitarian interventions, the composition of the relief supplies in the field of WASH and Health of the last transports were defined based on a near-term assessment of the existing needs of the affected population. A fact-finding mission carried out by a team of SDC/HA experts to the Donetsk and Luhansk regions carried-out in February/ March 2019 had reconfirmed the need for humanitarian aid in the fields of drinking water and healthcare.

Partnerships

The Swiss humanitarian transports are coordinated with the Ukrainian government and local partners and aligned with the UN Multi-Year Humanitarian Response Plan 2019/20. Coordination and information exchange is taking place with WHO, UNICEF/WASH Cluster, ICRC and other stakeholders. All humanitarian supplies are provided exclusively upon the request of the beneficiary institutions.

In 2016/17 SDC/HA supported the international non-governmental organisation Halo Trust working in the field of humanitarian demining-related activities. Since 2018, the SDC/HA supports in a substantial way the local non-governmental organisation SOS Donbas which advises IDPs on legal issues.

Swiss development assistance in Ukraine


The overall goal of Switzerland's assistance to Ukraine is to promote cohesion, inclusive democratic governance and sustainable socio-economic development in favour of a more peaceful, equitable and prosperous society. Switzerland focuses its support on four areas: health, governance and peacebuilding, energy efficiency and sustainable urban and economic development. In these areas, a range of projects is implemented in close cooperation with Ukrainian and international partners.

Further information

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