

Facts and figures

More than 5 million people in Ukraine are affected by the current conflict.

1.4 million registered internally displaced persons in Ukraine

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

SDC/HA commitment in 2015

Activities in the fields of drinking water, healthcare emergency aid (shelter/non-food items) and coordination of humanitarian aid on the ground

1'265 tonnes of humanitarian goods delivered in total

Support for the following organisations/operations:

ICRC: CHF 500,000
People in Need (NGO):
Survival assistance CHF 480,000

SHA experts made available:

WFP: one monitoring and protection expert

UNHCR: one cash and voucher expert

OCHA: one coordination expert

Budget: CHF 3.5 million

Local SDC presence

Swiss Cooperation Office in Ukraine since 1999



Since April 2015, SDC Humanitarian Aid has organised six humanitarian road convoys of water treatment materials and medical supplies to the Donetsk region. © SDC

Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC HA) direct operations

On 26 October 2015, the SDC HA has delivered another shipment of 505 tonnes in total of medical supplies and water purification chemicals to partners on both sides of the contact line. In total 31 trucks have been sent to Krasnoarmeisk, Mariupol (government-controlled area – GCA) and Donetsk (non-government-controlled area – NGCA).

Between April and June 2015, Switzerland carried out four aid convoys with the support of the Ukrainian authorities to the (GCA) and interlocutors in (NGCA) of Ukraine. A total of 38 trucks carrying 740 tonnes of water-treatment chemicals and medical supplies were transported from Dnipropetrovsk to Krasnoarmeisk (GCA) and Donetsk (NGCA).

The chemicals supplied for treating drinking water contributed to ensuring that more than 3 million people in the Donetsk region, on both sides of the contact line, had access to clean drinking water for several months. The previous shipments helped to avoid splitting the water utility between separate authorities for the government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas and the negative consequences this would have for water consumers.

Thanks to the medical equipment and medicines that were delivered to five hospitals in Donetsk in June, chemotherapy for several hundred cancer patients was maintained, and in Dnipropetrovsk at least one hundred patients with kidney failure received regular kidney dialysis for three months.

Background

Despite a negotiated ceasefire, the armed conflict in Ukraine, that broke out in April 2014, continues to spark clashes again and again causing many casualties and massive destruction. By the end of September 2015 at least 8,050 people had been killed. According to the Ukrainian authorities, the number of internally displaced persons amounts to more than 1.4 million, and approximately 1.1 million Ukrainian refugees are now in neighbouring countries, mainly in the Russian Federation, Belarus and Moldova (source: UNHCR). In the government controlled-area (GCA) of Ukraine there is an ever-growing need for shelter, food and medical supplies for IDPs. In the non-government-controlled (NGCA) area supplies of electricity, gas, water, social and financial services are restricted to some extent. The situation for the population living along both sides of the contact line is precarious in particular for the poor, the elderly, people with disabilities or chronic illnesses, and families with no fixed income. The situation has been exacerbated by the fact that since July 2015 access for humanitarian organisations to the NGCA has been blocked and most aid convoys have had to be suspended.

Switzerland's response to the crisis

In response to the crisis in Eastern Ukraine, Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC HA) resumed its commitment in 2014, amounting to CHF 2.5 million, focusing on financial and personnel support to the activities of multilateral organisations on both sides of the contact line.

In 2015, the SDC HA allocated a budget of CHF 3.5 million. It pursues four bilateral lines of action (coordination of humanitarian aid on the ground, healthcare, emergency aid and drinking water) as well as a support to the ICRC. Corresponding with actual needs, two third of the budget will be allocated to GCA and the rest to NGCA.

Direct operations

In view of the difficult access for most NGOs to people in need in the NGCA, the SDC HA, as a governmental organisation, adopted a different approach, carrying out its activities in the water and healthcare sectors as direct actions. The increase in hepatitis A infections in Donetsk in March 2015 as a result of inadequately purified water required a rapid response. The water utility in Donetsk was identified as a partner in the water sector because, despite the conflict, it continued to supply the local population on both sides of the contact line with drinking water through its system of pipes.

Between April and June 2015, the SDC HA carried out four aid convoys GCA and NGCA. A total of 38 trucks carrying 740 tonnes of water-treatment chemicals and medical supplies were transported from Dnipropetrovsk to Krasnoarmejsk (GCA) and Donetsk (NGCA). Approximately 3.2 million people on both sides of the contact line were supplied with drinking water for more than six months. Thanks to the fact that the chemicals were divided up between the government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas according to the existing needs, the risk was avoided of breaking up the water utility between the government-controlled and non-

government-controlled areas and of access to water being used by the conflict parties for political/military purposes. One objective of the Swiss operation was also to take a pioneering role for other humanitarian organisations.

In addition, five hospitals on both sides of the contact line were provided with medical equipment and medicines. As a result, in Dnipropetrovsk at least one hundred patients suffering from kidney failure have received regular kidney dialysis, and in Donetsk chemotherapy for several hundred cancer patients and other treatments were ensured for three months.

At the end of August, an assessment mission comprising experts from the SHA in Donetsk and Luhansk region continued to report humanitarian needs in the areas of emergency aid, drinking water and healthcare in anticipation of winter. For this reason, the SDC HA decided to send two other convoys with 505 tonnes of medical supplies and water purification chemicals at the end of October 2015. 31 trucks delivered the aid goods to partners on both sides of the contact line.

Aid and partner organisations

To boost coordination and efficiency of the international aid, Switzerland has placed an SHA expert at the disposal of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to set up and operate an office in Luhansk.


In addition, since June 2015 the SDC HA has also been supporting the Czech NGO "People in Need" which provides survival assistance for 8,000 persons most in need in the conflict zone in the form of food and materials for emergency repairs of houses damaged by the conflict.

Current Swiss activities in Ukraine

The overall goal of Switzerland's development assistance to Ukraine is to promote cohesion, inclusive democratic governance and sustainable socio-economic development in Ukraine aiming at a peaceful, equitable and prosperous society. To this end, Switzerland focuses on four main areas of support: health, governance and peacebuilding, sustainable energy management and urban development as well as sustainable economic development.

Further information

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