

# Operational Update

December 2019

In 2019, UNHCR and its NGO partners rehabilitated 1,263 homes of conflict-affected families on both sides of the contact in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. UNHCR prioritizes families with specific needs who are unable to repair their homes themselves as well as those living near the contact line. *More on page 2.*

In December, UNHCR Ukraine received funds from the Government of Latvia to assist conflict-affected and displaced persons in eastern Ukraine. UNHCR is very grateful for the support of its donors in 2019! To see who our donors were in 2019, visit our [dedicated donor page](#).

In December, UNHCR jointly with UNDP held a three-day Forum on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Sviatohirsk. The event brought both humanitarian and development agencies together. In total, the event gathered over a hundred participants. *More on page 3.*

## KEY INDICATORS

**25,218**

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other conflict-affected persons have received **legal assistance** from UNHCR partners in 2019.

**864**

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have been selected to **receive cash for protection** through the individual protection assistance programme (IPA) in 2019.

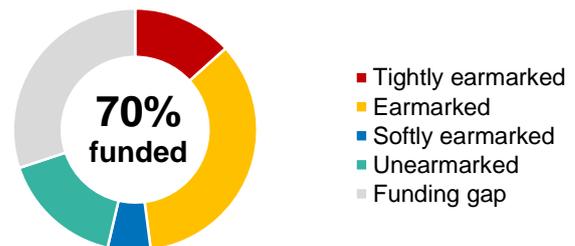
**2,169**

Households in eastern Ukraine have benefited from UNHCR **shelter assistance** in 2019.

## FUNDING (AS OF 7 JANUARY 2020)

**USD 27.8 million**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2019

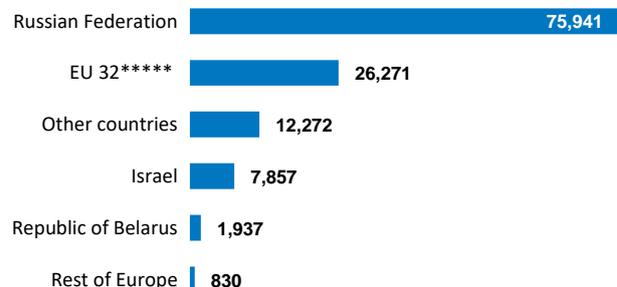


## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)\* AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS\*\*

**1.5 million**\*\*\*

## REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE

**125,108**\*\*\*\*



\*Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA)

\*\*Vulnerable, conflict-affected persons living along the contact line in GCA and non-government controlled areas (NGCA)

\*\*\*Sources: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), UNHCR

\*\*\*\*Source: UNHCR PopStats, December 2018

\*\*\*\*\*28 EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland



In December, UNHCR joined an online humanitarian flash mob called **#TetrisChallenge**. The flash mob was initiated by the ICRC and the Swiss Embassy in Ukraine to mark the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. The picture shows UNHCR's staff and equipment used in the agency's daily operations arranged in "Tetris-style". Photo by UNHCR.

## Operational Highlights

During the reporting period, the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) recorded 21,500 ceasefire violations, or a 12 per cent decrease as compared to November. In December, OHCHR confirmed three conflict-related civilian casualties. At the same time, the UNHCR-led Shelter Cluster reported that 21 new civilian houses were damaged or destroyed by shelling in December, bringing the total number for 2019 to 776, a 5 per cent increase compared to 2018.

**Emergency response to newly damaged homes:** Jointly with its NGO partners – Proliska, the Donbas Development Centre (DDC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – UNHCR continued providing Acute Emergency Kits (AEKs) to persons with specific needs who had their houses damaged by recent shelling, such as in Zolote on 21 December where civilian homes were hit. AEKs are

composed of basic shelter material such as tarpaulins, strings and wood that can be used for immediate small-scale repair of damaged houses. In 2019, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partners provided AEKs to 1,690 persons residing on both sides of the 'contact line' which allowed them to temporarily fix their houses as they wait for shelter repairs either by UNHCR and its NGO partners or by the authorities. *Photo by Proliska (top right) shows Proliska delivering AEKs to conflict-affected villagers in Zolote.*



**New windows for New Year celebrations:** During the reporting period, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner DDC completed the repairs of windows and doors in 90 apartments in multi-storey buildings that had been damaged by the conflict in and around Donetsk city. These repairs targeted persons with specific needs such as the elderly and women-at-risk. Thanks to these repairs, entire multi-storey buildings can now enjoy warmer temperatures during the cold Ukrainian winters. Furthermore, families who had been displaced from their apartments were able to return and celebrate the New Year and Christmas in the comfort and warmth of their homes. This brings the total amount of apartments in multi-storey buildings with windows and doors repaired in 2019 to 286. *Photo by UNHCR (on the left.)*

**Shelter monitoring missions:** In December, UNHCR monitored the quality of its shelter rehabilitation programme completed in 2019. During these monitoring missions, UNHCR also assessed the protection needs of conflict-affected persons to see if they require further assistance. In 2019, UNHCR completed the rehabilitation of 1,263 houses in settlements on both sides of the contact line. UNHCR targets persons with specific needs who are unable to do the repair works themselves. *Photo by UNHCR (bottom right). UNHCR's staff member meets with conflict-affected family whose house has been repaired by UNHCR.*

**Freedom of movement:** In December, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine recorded 1,17 million crossings at the five entry-exit checkpoints (EECPs) located in eastern Ukraine. In 2019, a total of 13,9 million persons crossed the contact line, or a 2 per cent increase as compared to 2018. During the reporting period, UNHCR's NGO partners confirmed the death of two elderly persons at the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. In December, the two electric cars operated by UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska transported 17,640 individuals with specific needs across an 800 metres long passage between the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge and the governmental side of the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP.



**New Peaceful Coexistence Project:** On 12 December, UNHCR inaugurated the community centre "Blue Lab" in Sievierodonetsk, which serves approximately 200 displaced and conflict-affected persons. The "Blue Lab" will be used for educational and cultural events in order to promote social cohesion among youth. The centre was rehabilitated as a part of UNHCR's Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs). In total, UNHCR implemented 73 PCPs in conflict-affected areas in eastern Ukraine in 2019.

## Key Advocacy Messages for December

- UNHCR welcomes the adoption of a **new Electoral Code** by the Parliament of Ukraine. The new Code will ensure that internally displaced persons in Ukraine can vote in local elections. This positive development means that in 2020, IDPs will have the right to exercise their voting rights in local elections for the first time. Nevertheless, moving forward it will be important to ensure that IDPs have information on how to meaningfully exercise this right. UNHCR stands ready to support the Ukrainian authorities and civil society partners with the implementation of these recommendations.
- In December, UNHCR's NGO partners reported numerous cases in which civilians **were not allowed to cross** back to the non-government controlled side of the contact line due to **a new order**, which imposes certain restrictions on the crossing of persons who have accumulated debts. UNHCR will continue monitoring and analyzing the situation in order to inform its advocacy interventions vis-à-vis governmental authorities.

### UNHCR'S RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS:

**[THEMATIC UPDATE] Legislative Update for December:** provides an analysis by UNHCR's protection team of the recent displacement-related legislation updates.

**[SNAPSHOT] "Crossing the contact line":** this joint UNHCR/Right to Protection (R2P) monitoring report presents the results of data collected during the protection monitoring visits of R2P at the EECPs along the contact line in November.



## Humanitarian Development Nexus

- From 9 to 11 December, UNHCR jointly with UNDP held a three-day **Forum on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Sviatohirsk**. The event brought together more than a **hundred participants** from UN agencies, NGOs as well as **five women-led initiative groups** working with conflict-affected communities along the contact line. SGBV activists and survivors also participated and shared their stories. The event resulted in the development of a **common framework on the provision of legal protection** to victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. *Photo by UNHCR (on the right).*



## Donor Relations



- **Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM):** On 9 and 10 December, UNHCR facilitated a mission of BPRM of the US State Department to the conflict-affected areas of Donetsk oblast. The delegation observed UNHCR's protection activities for stateless and displaced persons and met with officials of the **State Migration Service (SMS)** as well as with persons of concern who received support from UNHCR and its NGO partners. During the mission, UNHCR also facilitated BPRM's participation in the **Forum on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Sviatohirsk**. *Photo by UNHCR (on the left).*

- **European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO):** On 12 December, UNHCR facilitated a mission of ECHO to Donetsk oblast to observe interlinkages between medical and protection challenges faced by persons of concern in eastern Ukraine. ECHO met with elderly and persons with disabilities in **Avdiiivka** who received UNHCR's '**cash for protection**', which enabled them to obtain medical certificates required for them to receive social payments and pensions. UNHCR's '**cash for protection**' is generously funded by ECHO.

- EU Delegation:** On 17 December, UNHCR facilitated a joint visit of ECHO and the Delegation of the European Union in Ukraine to Stanytsia Luhanska EECP to observe the conditions of pedestrians who cross. The delegation saw the newly repaired bridge as well as the functioning of two electric cars launched by UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska in 2019. *Photo by UNHCR (on the right).*
- Latvia's Support to Medical Centre in Sloviansk:** In December, the Government of Latvia confirmed its decision to allocate funds to support UNHCR in eastern Ukraine.



## MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE TO REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS

### Protection of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- On 7 and 8 December, UNHCR organized a workshop for refugees and asylum-seeking students. The event was staged as part of the DAFI scholarship programme generously supported by the Government of Germany. In total, 18 participants learned how to develop, implement and manage small scale projects. *Photo by UNHCR (on the right).*
- On 10 December, UNHCR participated in a first-ever National Forum on Migration and Prevention of Human Trafficking organized by the Ministry of Social Policy. At the event, UNHCR presented key advocacy messages on the protection of refugees and IDPs in Ukraine. UNHCR also facilitated the participation of an asylum-seeker who shared his perspective on local integration in Ukraine.
- On 19 December, UNHCR's NGO partner the Tenth of April organized a training for interpreters working for the State Migration Service (SMS). The event was attended by 25 participants, including interpreters and the SMS staff from six regions of Ukraine.



# 1,600

#### Legal consultations

were provided to refugees and asylum-seekers in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in December

# 700

#### Social consultations

were provided to refugees and asylum-seekers in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in December

# 47

#### Sessions on Psychosocial Assistance

were provided to refugees and asylum-seekers in December

# 38

#### Home visits undertaken

for refugees and asylum-seekers, including unaccompanied minors in December

### Livelihood Interventions for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- In December, thanks to the cooperation between UNHCR, Foodprosvita and big food retailers, four representatives of refugee and IDP communities participated in a business development training programme for young entrepreneurs in the food industry. The acquired skills will enable participants to develop their businesses and projects. *Photo by Foodprosvita.*



### Assistance to Stateless Persons and Persons at Risk of Statelessness

- On 5 December, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted in the first reading, a draft law on statelessness determination procedure (SDP). UNHCR has followed this development with great interest and has been advocating for the procedure to become a reality together with its NGO partners. The draft law envisages the issuance of an ID document confirming the legality of residence for stateless persons in Ukraine and ensures simplified access to employment. If adopted, the draft law can significantly contribute to the protection of stateless persons in Ukraine.

**67**

Stateless persons  
(or at risk of) were identified  
and provided with legal aid  
in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattia and Kharkiv regions  
in December thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners'  
support

**19**

Persons received  
passports  
in December  
thanks to UNHCR and NGO  
partners' support

**18**

Persons received  
duplicates of birth  
certificates  
in December  
thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners'  
support

**10**

Persons obtained their  
birth certificates  
for the first time  
in December  
thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support

**PROTECTION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS****Protection Cluster**

- During the reporting period, the **Protection Cluster** prepared **advocacy messages for the Humanitarian Country Team's advocacy strategy**. These highlighted the need to enhance the protection of conflict-affected children; provide appropriate mine victims assistance and mine education; strengthen the support for gender-based violence survivors; increase social participation of elderly people and persons with disabilities; establish compensation mechanisms for damaged and destroyed property, as well as the administrative procedure for birth and death registration for people in conflict-affected areas of Ukraine.
- On 2 December, the Protection Cluster Coordinator spoke on a webinar panel titled "**Linking the Global Protection 2020 Plan of Action for IDPs to the Centrality of Protection across the Nexus**". The event provided an opportunity to highlight the activities implemented by protection partners in line with the Humanitarian Development Nexus (HDN) in Ukraine. These include the HDN component in legal assistance, mine action and psychosocial support, as well as improving social cohesion and resilience for conflict-affected and displaced people that are part of the durable solutions strategy.
- On 11 and 12 December, the Protection Cluster jointly with the Anti-Trafficking Task Team under the Global Protection Cluster organized a **workshop on Counter-Trafficking in Humanitarian Action** in Kyiv. During the event, representatives of 31 humanitarian and development organizations discussed the risks of trafficking in armed conflict and response to the needs of survivors, including the Ukraine National Referral Mechanism.
- On 16 and 17 December, the Protection Cluster conducted **two workshops on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Protection of Civilian Population in the Armed Conflicts** as part of training on Civil-Military Coordination in Sviatohirsk. In total, 20 participants from among humanitarian actors, state services and military authorities took part in both sessions, improving their knowledge of IHL and protection standards.

**UNHCR Protection Activities**

- **Advocacy interventions:** In December, UNHCR participated in a series of high-level events to mark **Human Rights Week in the Parliament of Ukraine**. UNHCR facilitated two **expert discussions on social protection for residents in the non-government controlled areas (NGCA) of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and facilitating their access to civil documentation**. During the discussion, UNHCR advocated for simplifying the procedures of issuing birth and death certificates of conflict-affected persons.
- **Legal partners' capacity building:** On 7 and 8 December, UNHCR supported the "Kyiv Legal Club" and the NGO "Legal Hackers" in organizing a **legal "hackathon"**. The event brought together experts in legal aid and information technology who developed tools to facilitate access to legal assistance.
- **High-Level Workshop on Provision of Social Services:** On 26 December, UNHCR organized a **workshop focused on practical aspects in the implementation of a new Law on Social Services** entering into force on 1 January 2020. The event in Sloviansk was joined by more than **50 participants** from UNHCR's NGO partners, as well as state and local authorities.



## Legal Assistance and Protection Counselling

# 1,070

Internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons (68% female, 32% male) received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in December

# 2,819

Persons benefited from individual protection counselling in December

# 34

Group consultations on protection-related issues were provided to 503 persons (72% female, 28% male) in areas along the contact line in December



## Social Accompaniment

- In the month of December, UNHCR's NGO partners provided social accompaniment to **171 individuals** who needed support in obtaining personal documentation, accessing state services, or receiving authorization to cross checkpoints, among other things. In some cases, individuals were supported with transportation to access public buildings and register for social services.

*60-years old Stepan\*, from the village of Nyzhnoteple in Luhansk oblast, faced numerous bureaucratic challenges in trying to obtain a certificate confirming his disability status. After the local medical centre refused to issue such documentation for him, he decided to turn to UNHCR's NGO partner Proliska for support. Through a coordinated effort, Proliska's team provided transportation for Stepan and facilitated his visit to a regional hospital in Sievierodonetsk, where he was able to undergo the necessary medical examinations. This enabled Stepan to obtain the certificate needed for him to be able to receive benefits as a person with disabilities. Photo by Proliska.*



## Psychosocial assistance

# 44

59% Female | 41% Male  
**Persons received consultations in December**

During the reporting period, UNHCR's NGO partner **Proliska** provided **44 vulnerable persons** with psychological consultations to help conflict-affected persons deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety, and psychological tension.



## Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

- In December, UNHCR supported **conflict-affected communities in Chermalyk and Starohnativka** in organizing **awareness-raising sessions** on SGBV prevention and response. **Twenty women** participated in the training and learned about referral mechanisms and the **16 Days against gender-based violence campaign**.
- On 9 December, UNHCR participated in a presentation of the **"Gender passport" of Luhansk oblast**, which was developed jointly with the local authorities and NGOs. This tool was created to better disaggregate data and address the needs of all gender groups during the humanitarian planning.

## \$ Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)

# 25

IPA cash and in-kind beneficiaries selected in December

UNHCR continues identifying and providing the most vulnerable conflict-affected individuals in eastern Ukraine with **cash for protection**, used to cover different types of needs – from winterization and livelihood items to medical examinations or procedures. In December, the number of beneficiaries, selected for IPA programme was **25 persons**.



*Yevhen\*, 68, from the village of Stepne in Donetsk oblast, was injured during the shelling in 2017. In this incident, he also lost his passport and since then lived without any ID document. As a result of his injury, Yevhen has only been able to move around in the house in which he lives by leaning on a chair. Thanks to ‘cash for protection’ assistance by UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska, he bought a walker, which increased his mobility and autonomy. In addition, UNHCR supported Yevhen in restoring his passport. With his ID document, he becomes eligible for social benefits and to be admitted into a specialized home. Photo by Proliska.*

## 🔨 Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)

# 73

Projects approved in 2019

UNHCR supports small to medium-scale infrastructure repairs proposed by communities or local authorities in eastern Ukraine. PCPs aim at creating an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between the displaced populations and host communities and complement the resilience of IDPs and affected communities. In total, in 2019, UNHCR has initiated the implementation of **73 Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)** in eastern Ukraine.



*This ambulatory centre located some 40 kilometres away from Donetsk was rehabilitated by UNHCR and serves both local and displaced populations. In total, the settlement has an estimated population of 9,000 persons and hosts 40 displaced families from the conflict zone. UNHCR reinforced the cement base of the old ambulatory and repaired a large crack that had been caused by nearby shelling. Locals even feared that the building might collapse. Once the structure of the facility was secured, local residents completed internal renovations, making the centre fully operational. It now serves approximately 125 patients daily. Photo by UNHCR.*

## 🔄 Community Support Initiatives (CSIs)

# 165

Initiative approved in 2019

UNHCR in Ukraine empowers communities of internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons throughout the country. CSIs implemented in the spirit of **Community-Based Protection** approach include a range of activities designed to mobilize and empower communities, strengthen their ability to organize emergency responses and self-advocate with local and national authorities in order to find durable solutions for their own protection.



*In December, a community support initiative (CSI) was implemented in the village of Lastochkyne in Donetsk oblast to support local and displaced residents in their efforts to organize joint activities. UNHCR and its NGO partner R2P provided a sewing machine and a desk to the community centre which remains the only space where people can gather for celebrations, workshops or cultural events. During the New Year season, a group of local women used the sewing machine to create costumes for a local performance organized for the New Years' celebration. The community will also use the center for regular sewing classes for women to promote their self-reliance. Photo by R2P.*



## SHELTER/NON-FOOD ITEMS

### Shelter and NFI Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

# 1,263

Shelters repaired  
in 2019

thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

# 1,783

Persons received cash  
for shelter repairs  
in 2019

thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

# 1,690

Persons received  
Acute Emergency Kits  
in 2019

thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

# 10,802

Persons  
Benefited from NFI  
assistance in 2019

thanks to UNHCR and partners' support



## Voluntary Relocation

# 14

Conflict-affected  
families relocated  
to safer homes  
in 2019

In 2019, with the conflict in Ukraine stretching into its sixth year and with many families with specific needs still living under very difficult conditions in locations affected by the conflict, UNHCR initiated a [pilot project of voluntarily relocating families who live in dangerous areas along the contact line](#). Persons who benefit from this project are carefully selected based on [protection vulnerability criteria](#) and a [security assessment](#) of the settlements where they are relocated to.

## Working in Partnership

The humanitarian response to displacement in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by the government, international organizations, national and international NGOs. In providing support to persons of concern, UNHCR works closely with the Government of Ukraine. In the case of IDPs, UNHCR has signed a Letter of Understanding with the [Ministry for Veterans, Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons](#). In the case of refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR cooperates closely with the [State Migration Service of Ukraine](#). UNHCR works together with [13 NGO partners](#). UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster. UNHCR together with OCHA also co-leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for critical financial support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

The indicative level of funding for the operation is **US \$4,669,183 million**. This figure is based on contributions earmarked to Ukraine, the indicative allocation of flexible funds and adjustments.

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

**Sweden** 99.8 million | **Private donors Spain** 73.8 million | **United Kingdom** 44.6 million | **Norway** 44.5 million  
**Netherlands** 43.1 million | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 41.8 million | **Germany** 28.9 million |  
**Japan** 25.7 million | **Denmark** 24.4 million | **Switzerland** 15.1 million | **Private Donors Japan** 23.4 million |  
**France** 14 million | **Private donors Italy** 17.5 million | **Private donors USA** 15 million | **Private Donors Sweden**  
13.6 million | **Ireland** 10.2 million | **Italy** 10 million

### SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

**United States of America** 15.9 million | **Private donors Australia** 13.7 million  
**Private donors Republic of Korea** 2.8 million | **Canada** 2.3 million

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE | USD

**United States of America** 6.7 million | **European Union** 2.1 million | **Germany** 1.1 million | **CERF** 0.93 million  
**Japan** 0.84 million | **Canada** 0.57 million | **Sweden** 0.55 million | **Norway** 0.34 million | **Russian Federation**  
0.25 million | **Estonia** 0.23 million | **Lithuania** 0.03 million | **Private donors** 0.03 million

## Contacts

E-mail: [ukrkom@unhcr.org](mailto:ukrkom@unhcr.org), Tel: +38 044 288-9710

## Links

UNHCR Ukraine: [www.unhcr.org/ua](http://www.unhcr.org/ua) - Twitter: [www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine](https://www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv) - Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/unhcr\\_ukraine](https://www.flickr.com/photos/unhcr_ukraine)

*Please note that this report attempts to highlight the main activities implemented by UNHCR and its NGO partners within the selected reporting period. Please note that it is by no means exhaustive. For additional details about our work, do not hesitate to check [www.unhcr.org/ua](http://www.unhcr.org/ua) or, contact us directly at [ukrkom@unhcr.org](mailto:ukrkom@unhcr.org).*

*\*Please note that the names of persons who appear in this report have been changed for their protection.*