

UKRAINE CRISIS

Overview of activities, January and February 2015



Heavy shelling of residential areas and towns have continued to put civilians' lives in peril throughout January and February. The ceasefire agreement signed recently in Minsk enabled the teams to reach areas that they could not access for a long time. But some areas remained totally isolated. Despite dangerous conditions, teams from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are on the ground, on both sides of the frontline, including Debaltseve, organizing relief operations. People desperately need food, water, medicine, power and shelter.

- **Providing food, water and essential households' materials**

More than **1'400 tons** of humanitarian assistance have been distributed to the conflict-affected population in Donetsk and Lugansk regions. More than **80'000 persons**, residents and displaced people, received food and other items such as hygiene parcels, blankets, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting. Assistance was also provided to some **4'000 persons** staying in **19 hospitals and institutions** such as orphanages and elderly houses.

Construction material for roofing and tools to undertake much-needed repairs of public and residential buildings damaged by shelling were handed over to the municipal authorities across the regions.

Equipment and tools have been donated to Lugansk Water Board (Vodokanal) to assist in repairing the network and increasing the volume of water provided.

- **Safeguarding health care**

Medical supplies (ex : dressing materials, external fixators, sutures, infusions, X-Ray films) for the treatment of people wounded in the hostilities and of the internally displaced were donated to **10 hospitals and to one first aid post** in Donetsk and Lugansk regions, including the hospitals in the city of Donetsk.

Hemodialysis consumables were provided to Kalinina Hospital in Donetsk, to cover the needs of hemodialysis department for one month.

7 Hospital/health structures received rehabilitation works to ensure that their operational capacity is maintained.

- **Visiting detainees**

The ICRC visited people held in connection with the conflict in detention places under the control of the Ukrainian authorities in Zaporizhia, Odesa, Poltava, Kharkiv and Kyiv to monitor the treatment they receive and the conditions in which they are being held. In total the ICRC carried out **21 visits in 9 places of detentions**. A first visit has also been conducted in opposition held area to wounded detainees. In total, the ICRC visited and registered more than **170 detainees** arrested in link with the conflict.

The ICRC visited people held in penitentiary establishments in Donetsk and Lugansk opposition held areas to assess the conditions of detention in those facilities. As a result, the ICRC has distributed food items and hygiene products for 13 places of detention under the Penitentiary Service, located in the territories under the opposition control. In total, more than **8000 detainees** were able to benefit from the assistance.

In full transparency with detaining authorities and upon the detainee's requests, the ICRC sends family news to the relatives of a detainee. More than **150 family news** have been passed on to relatives of detainees.

- **Tracing missing persons**

The ICRC have been active in documenting and collecting cases of missing persons together with the URCS. The ICRC is currently following **300 individual cases**. Representation to authorities on all side are ongoing in order to clarify the fate of those persons.

- **Dialogue with the parties to the conflict**

The ICRC is maintaining contact with all parties to the conflict on the issue of the conduct of hostilities. In particular, the ICRC is particularly concerned about the use of explosive weapon in populated areas which causes direct and unacceptable immediate harm to civilians, civilian property and essential services, but also generates severe and potentially long-term consequences for the population.

A training course on international humanitarian law in decision-making process for the military operations was held in Zhytomyr with commanders, planners, legal advisors and CIMIC officers assigned to 95th Airmobile Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as well as representatives of the Operational Command of the Ukrainian Airborne Troops. All participants included officers from the combat units deployed on combat operations in eastern Ukraine.

- **Reducing the humanitarian impact of unexploded weapons**

Following an assessment of the situation in the Donbas region, the ICRC locally produced and distributed **150,000 leaflets and 3,000 posters** to raise awareness among the population in those regions of the risks posed by mines and explosive remnants of war

To support the State's efforts to clear explosive remnants of war in Donetsk and Lugansk regions, the ICRC donated to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine metal detectors, protective aprons, visors and other equipment.

Cooperating with the Red Cross movement

A Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) warehouse renovation has been organized and financed by the ICRC. In an effort to raise the awareness of civilian population about the dangers posed by mines and explosive remnants of war, the ICRC started the training of **54 Ukraine Red Cross staff and volunteers** in mines and explosives remnants of war education.

500 body bags were delivered to the Civil-Military Directorate of the Ukrainian Armed Forces for their use in the East of Ukraine and stock refilling.

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