



UKRAINE WINTER RESPONSE PLAN 2024-2025



77-year-old Kateryna lives alone in the village Huta Mezhyhirska in Kyivska oblast. At the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, she had to spend several weeks hiding in her basement, and sometimes in the nearby forest. Last winter, neighbours and social workers helped Kateryna insulate her home, including with materials provided in UNHCR's Rapid Thermal Kit. © UNHCR/Iryna Tymchyshyn

CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

- **Large-scale Russian aerial attacks continue across Ukraine, with a sustained targeting of energy infrastructure.** According to latest estimates, Ukraine has lost more than 60% of its energy generation capacity, with potentially dire consequences on the quality of everyday life in Ukraine as winter approaches. Rolling power outages are now a common occurrence across the country and will likely worsen in the coming months. People will struggle to remain safe and warm in their homes as energy prices, including for solid fuel, are expected to soar, along with household expenditures. The situation is expected to be particularly severe in the east and south of Ukraine, where shelling and targeted attacks on civilian and critical infrastructure are daily occurrences. Local authorities in the nine frontline oblasts have provided preliminary estimates of more than 862,000 at-risk vulnerable people who will need additional support in winter.
- **Early investments in winterization programming and procurement—among humanitarian partners and donors—are crucial** if people are to remain safe and warm in their homes—and avoid being forced to relocate as temperatures drop. UNHCR's winter response will complement broader efforts to restore damaged energy infrastructure—and provide direct support to vulnerable people in need.
- **UNHCR is working closely with partners to prepare for an integrated, multi-faceted response to help people survive the harsh winter conditions in Ukraine.** In coordination with the Government, and as part of the broader inter-agency response plan, UNHCR's six-month winterization response will target people with specific vulnerabilities, displaced and war-affected people.

KEY FIGURES AT A GLANCE:



600,000 displaced and other war-affected people to be supported with **cash assistance to cover additional winter needs, in line with vulnerability criteria established by the Shelter Cluster.**



\$170 million overall financial requirements for UNHCR's 2024-2025 winterization response



Working with **20 partners** including **16 national NGOs**, in coordination with the **Government of Ukraine** and contributing to the broader **inter-agency Winterization Response Plan**

MAIN RESPONSE AREAS

- 1. Cash support for additional winter needs - \$140 million**
Unconditional cash provides people agency to decide for themselves how best to address needs, supports local markets and suppliers, and has long been cited as the preferred modality of assistance. This winter and pending receipt of sufficient funds, UNHCR will target 600,000 highly vulnerable internally displaced people (IDPs) in Ukraine and war-affected populations across the crescent who meet the established vulnerability-based eligibility criteria, and in line with the Shelter Cluster overall strategy and recommendations. The transfer value of cash assistance is expected to be **roughly UAH 21,000 for six months per household**, pending final confirmation of the Shelter/NFI Cluster.
- 2. Alternative energy support - \$20 million**
As part of inter-agency efforts and in line with the priorities set by the Energy Coordination Group, UNHCR will contribute to building energy generation capacity, including through the provision of alternative energy sources such as generators or power banks, with a focus on strengthening household-level and community resilience.
- 3. Shelter, housing, and essential items - \$10 million**
UNHCR will continue to provide essential shelter and housing support to help keep people warm, including through: (1) **distribution of "Rapid Thermal Kits"**, consisting of materials used by Ukrainian families to insulate their homes, such as reflective insulation screens, transparent plastic sheets, foam strips, and building tape; (2) **essential repair works** to improve the extreme weather resistance of houses and repair damages, including through fixing holes in the roofs and walls, installation of windows and doors with modern triple glazed windows to reduce heat loss; (3) **insulation** of and winter repairs of collective sites, and; (4) Distribution of **blankets and other NFIs** in collective sites and other forms of institutional living, for those not eligible to cash assistance.



Anton is 85 years old, born in the village of Kyselivka, Mykolaivska oblast in southern Ukraine. His village was occupied by Russian Federation armed forces for nine months. He lived there his whole life, and only left as fighting intensified and after being wounded in a missile strike. He was taken to a hospital and underwent surgery. After the village was retaken by Ukrainian forces, he was able to return and now lives there with his wife, Evdokia. They do small scale farming and look after animals for a living. His house was almost completely destroyed by Russian shelling. UNHCR, through our local NGO partner The Tenth of April (TTA), helped Anton repair his home and provided him with a dry heater last winter to help the family stay warm as temperatures dropped below freezing.

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SUMMARY FINDINGS POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING 2023-2024 WINTERIZATION RESPONSE

Post distribution monitoring (PDM) is a core-component of UNHCR's ongoing effort to ensure accountability to those we serve and our donors, understand the impact of our interventions, and to adapt and course correct our response in future. The key findings from the 2023-2024 winterization response PDM are crucial in informing our planning for the forthcoming winter:

- **Cash assistance is an impactful, flexible, as well as the preferred means (among recipients) of mitigating adverse impacts of severe cold and heightened energy costs:** The majority of people (86%) preferred cash assistance as the modality of support to winter. The PDM also found that markets throughout the country remained resilient and relatively well-supplied throughout the winter—giving people agency to prioritize what to buy and supporting local businesses and suppliers. Overall, 86% of respondents who received cash assistance for winter highlighted one or more positive changes in their lives, with people being able to buy winter clothes, shoes, firewood, coal for heating, as well as pay utility bills for gas and electricity.
- **Effective coordination with the Government of Ukraine is essential—and significantly expands to the reach of UNHCR to quickly assist those most in need:** Coordination among the Ministry of Social Policy, the Pension Fund, UNHCR and partners—including through enrolment at multi-purpose protection centres—ensured the most vulnerable households were quickly reached and assisted. Across the board, households referred by the Government noticed positive changes after receiving UNHCR's cash assistance, stressing that the cash assistance kept them warm, that they could now pay for utilities, or buy warm clothes. The biggest positive impact was reported by Government referrals from frontline villages in Kharkivska oblast, where 83% felt a significant improvement in their living conditions.

- **Non-food items (NFIs) remain useful and impactful, but cash is the preferred mode of assistance:** While people reported that they are satisfied with the items received in the UNHCR NFI packages in terms of quality (85%), quantity (90%), and usefulness (78%), 71% of people noted that they would have preferred to receive cash assistance. The most useful items were the blankets, bed linen, and kitchen sets.
- **Rapid Thermal Kits had a positive impact and helped people insulate their homes:** 88% of the families reported the kits improved the thermal comfort of the houses and 98% said the quality of the materials used were average or above.

For more information, read the full PDM key findings [here](#).



Elina is a single mother and has experienced multiple displacements since 2016. Thanks to free legal assistance provided by UNHCR's partner Right to Protection, Elina was able to renew her documents and access the state allowance for IDPs. UNHCR also provided the family with cash assistance to help cover basic needs such as food and medicine, as well as winter heating costs and utility bills. "It was a miracle. We did not expect to receive this assistance. Now, I feel more confident about the future. I understand that we will manage to pay the bills and stay warm," she says. © UNHCR/Viktoriia Tiutiunyk

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit Ukraine's [Operational Data Portal](#) for more information products [here](#).
- UNHCR's [Regional Flash Update](#) on the Ukraine situation can be found [here](#).
- [Ukraine Protection Cluster Response Dashboard](#) can be found [here](#).
- [CCCM Cluster Collective Sites Mapping](#) [here](#)
- [Shelter Cluster Response Dashboard](#) [here](#).

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