

KEY FIGURES*

2.5 million

Elderly, women and children in need

20,520

Deliveries assisted with UNFPA reproductive health kits

3,300

People received psychosocial support from UNFPA mobile teams

1,755

Telephone consultations provided by 24-hour hotline

*cumulative data

Breaking the cycle of violence

UNFPA has launched a large-scale campaign to 'Break the Cycle' of gender-based violence (GBV) by raising awareness about the issue and providing information on available response services in five conflict-affected regions of Ukraine.

A total of 180,000 brochures are being distributed in more than 3,400 locations; they cover GBV awareness, advice for survivors, and simple recommendations on how to act in crisis situations to avoid and, if necessary, respond to GBV. Similar messages are being spread through an active social media campaign that aims to reach vulnerable populations in both government- and non-government-controlled areas. As part of the 'Break the Cycle' campaign, press conferences and roundtables were also held in five eastern cities, bringing together 180 representatives of local authorities, NGOs, and the media to discuss GBV prevention mechanisms.



One of the 'Break the Cycle' posters giving information about the hotline numbers that GBV survivors can call to seek help

In addition, training workshops for journalists were organised to sensitise regional media on speaking and writing about cases of GBV, as well as to raise the general awareness of the issue among conflict-affected populations.

Hotline for survivors of gender-based violence now available 24/7

The national hotline for GBV survivors is now available around the clock, operated by UNFPA implementing partner La-Strada. Previously, help could only be reached by telephone during weekday hours, but since many violent attacks happen at night or on the weekend, this UNFPA-supported extension of operating hours is vitally important. In its first weeks of 24/7 operation, the hotline received 1,755 calls from around the country, with 1,036 of these calls coming in during night-time and weekend hours. Most calls fielded by the hotline deal with

situations of domestic violence in which women are physically or sexually abused by their partners or even kicked out of their homes. Callers are seeking both psychological support and advice in dealing with cases of domestic violence and child abuse. Though the majority of those calling the hotline are women who are experiencing violence, abusers also occasionally seek help. Information about the 24-hour hotline is promoted through materials produced by UNFPA and its partners, as well as by the media and service providers.

Addressing sexual and reproductive health needs in conflict-affected areas



Marina safely delivered a boy with the help of obstetrician Vita Marchenko in the Kramatorsk maternity clinic, Donetsk region.
© Maks Levin/UNFPA Ukraine

The economic hardships and isolation experienced in non-government-controlled areas of Ukraine mean that many women face particular struggles to deliver their babies safely with the limited resources available in local hospitals. To ease that struggle, UNFPA in December 2015 delivered 116 reproductive health kits for provision of obstetrics-gynaecology care to five eastern regions of Ukraine. In addition, 2.5 million condoms and 40,000 pregnancy tests are being distributed through youth-friendly clinics and charitable organisations to address the growing sexual and reproductive health needs in conflict-affected areas. In January 2016, 27 emergency kits for local maternity clinics arrived in the Luhansk non-government-controlled area as part of a UN convoy. In addition, 576,000 condoms will be distributed to members of the most vulnerable population groups in the Luhansk area. Since the beginning of the crisis, UNFPA has sent reproductive health kits to health centres and hospitals in the conflict-affected areas that have been used for an estimated 12,000 normal deliveries and 8,520 complicated deliveries, including C-sections and miscarriages.

MOBILE TEAMS PROVIDING CRITICAL PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Svitlana received much-needed psychosocial support without leaving her house in Zorya village, Donetsk region. © Maks Levin/UNFPA Ukraine

“Every single day, I struggle for a better life for my children. Sometimes I lie in bed and cry for hours while they are sleeping,”



Svitlana, a single mother of three, told UNFPA mobile team members who visited her in Zorya village, where she lives after moving from conflict-affected Konstantinovka. Svitlana told the team that her neighbours had to look after her children while she was delivering her youngest son in a maternity clinic. Professional psychologists on the mobile team consulted with Svitlana and gave her information on what social assistance she is eligible for and contact details for centres she can reach out to for additional support. They also told her they would come back whenever she needs them. Svitlana is among the many women whose everyday challenges have been badly exacerbated by the conflict and who seek psychological support and advice from UNFPA-deployed mobile teams. During the four months they have been in operation, UNFPA mobile teams have provided psychosocial support to over 3,300 people, including those living in rural areas and communities, oftentimes far away from support centres in the cities.

Supporting local initiatives to prevent GBV

To raise awareness among affected populations about GBV and support community-based prevention actions, UNFPA has given mini-grants to 18 NGOs serving GBV survivors and has provided technical assistance to 21 centres of social services for family, children and youth. This funding, granted in cooperation with UNFPA implementing partner Health Right Ukraine, aims to support local-scale activities that raise awareness about existing local services, provide educational and information materials on GBV, raise awareness among women about their human rights, engage with media to attract attention to urgent problems, address root causes of inequalities, and promote social inclusion. Each NGO will implement its activities based on the work plan it developed, in coordination with UNFPA mobile teams operations and provision of services.