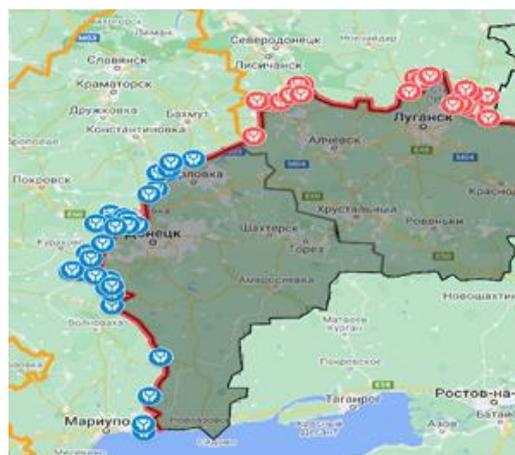


Eastern Ukraine: The needs of older people – 4th March 2022

Context

HelpAge International has been providing support to older women and men who live close to the previous contact line between separatist forces and the Ukrainian government since 2014. As of 4 March, the Ukrainian oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk are experiencing increased shelling. Many of the 4,800 older people previously involved in HelpAge activities, along with many more in the region, have become increasingly desperate and the need for urgent humanitarian support is rapidly growing.

Throughout this devastating crisis, HelpAge staff and volunteers have continued to provide psychosocial outreach to the people they support through regular phone calls. To better understand the situation, these volunteers interviewed 1,513 older people using a short multi-sectoral needs assessment between the 1 and 2 of March. The findings are highly concerning.



Locations of previous HelpAge activities

Key findings

Movement

99% of older people report that they do not want to be evacuated from their homes. This highlights that many of the older people we work with are likely to remain in their current homes.



Food

91% of older people report that they need food assistance. This is made worse by the fact that many older people have mobility difficulties and/or live alone with limited support which makes accessing sufficient food especially challenging.



WASH

79% of older people report that they do not have access to sufficient clean drinking water. Active shelling and airstrikes are disrupting the water supply systems. Also some electricity lines, as well as gas networks, have been damaged.



Health

34% of older people report that they need urgent medication for their chronic illnesses. This includes medication for diabetes, blood pressure and pain relief. The conflict has significantly disrupted local supply chains making access to basic items increasingly difficult.



Electricity

91% of older people report that the electricity supply has been interrupted and they are in need of candles. Temperatures are regularly below zero and homes remain too cold to live in with no means to heat them. Many older people need thermal blankets, warm clothes, and fuel.



Hygiene items

75% of older people report that they need hygiene items such as toothpaste, soap, adult diapers, and toilet paper.

