

Ukraine Conflict | ACT Appeal UKR211

ACT member: Hungarian Interchurch Aid

Reporting Period: 01.06.2025 – 31.08.2025

SitRep completed by: Dénes Madácsi

Date: 01/09/2025

A. Highlights

Please list 3 key strategic points of this reporting period at you want to communicate to ACT Alliance network

- **HIA** has **reached 906,723** people since 2022 February, providing access to basic humanitarian aid, protection activities and other life-saving services in Ukraine and Hungary.
- The **HEART project** (Holistic Empowerment and Access for Resilience and Transformation), supported by **ESF** has started and runs until November 2026. It aims to help the **social integration of women** who have fled Ukraine through innovative and socially sensitive approaches in **Hungary** and **Romania**. The program is coordinated by the Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA), in partnership with the Romanian organization AIDRom.
- Due to the positive results of the veteran rehabilitation pilot project implemented in the framework of the former appeal, and the ongoing preparation of the scale-up of the social and labour market re-integration activities for ex-combatants, as well as the intense localization efforts in this field, HIA and its local partner ADVANCE built strong **partnerships with veteran organizations, and become strategic partners of local and national authorities for veteran rehabilitation.**

B. Situation Overview

Please give a short overview of the overall situation (security, number of IPDs/Refugees, economic referencing to official resources) and important context updates in the countries where you are responding

According to the latest INSO Ukraine Biweekly Reports:

- In August, Russian aerial operations showed a mixed pattern. During the first half of the month, the overall number of aerial munitions decreased, with no nationwide complex strikes recorded, although daily loitering munition attacks persisted, targeting military and economic sites, including railway hubs in Synelnykove and Lozova. In the second half of the month, Russia resumed complex countrywide missile and loitering munition strikes, raising the threat level for civilians and increasing the likelihood of high-profile locations being targeted.
- On the ground, Russian advances in Donetska Oblast remained sudden but localized. While they did not result in a major frontline breakthrough, they highlighted the volatility of rear areas and the possibility of rapid changes in the security situation. Over the entire month, Russia gained around 230 square kilometers, primarily in Donetska, though without significant strategic impact.

- Elsewhere, Russian forces intensified UAV activity along the M14 highway between Mykolaiv and Kherson, further complicating access to Kherson City and surrounding settlements. This deterioration in security prompted several NGOs to suspend their movements in the area. Railway travel outside the immediate frontline remained largely unaffected, yet the overall risk environment, particularly for civilians, worsened during the second half of the month due to the renewed large-scale strikes.

The total number of refugees from Ukraine recorded globally is **5,698,470*** of which **5,137,910*** are recorded in Europe. In Hungary, there are over **64,190** refugees from Ukraine who applied for asylum, temporary protection or similar national protection schemes. ¹

*As of mid-June 2023, an estimated 1.2 million Ukrainians were recorded in the Russian Federation under different legal forms of stay (other than refugee or temporary asylum status) and reported by UNHCR as persons in a refugee-like situation. However, this figure has not been updated since June 2023, and therefore can no longer be included in UNHCR's official statistics for 2024.

C. Challenges

Please give a brief overview on challenges faced in the reporting period and any deviations from plan, along with mitigation measures.

During the reporting period, several operational, organizational, and systemic challenges emerged that affected program implementation both in Ukraine and Hungary.

1. Donor engagement and funding gaps

At a broader level, declining donor engagement posed one of the most significant constraints. Due to war fatigue, competing global crises, and the restructuring of humanitarian funding mechanisms, available resources fell far short of actual needs. As a consequence, HIA had to scale down its operations in Eastern and Central Ukraine, reducing staff and capacities in key locations such as Dnipro, Kyiv, and Lviv. This inevitably limited the organization's ability to respond effectively to the needs of vulnerable populations in these regions.

2. Project-specific issues

Several project-specific challenges were also recorded. In Kherson, aligning shelter construction plans with both community needs and legislative requirements proved difficult. In Kyiv region, school repair projects faced quality concerns and newly emerging infrastructural problems, necessitating revisions to the original plans. Procurement processes also faced setbacks, such as the unsuccessful tender for a bus for a youth sports club in Ternopil. In psychosocial support programs, data collection was complicated by parental absence during activities, while procurement-related projects experienced minor delivery delays.

As most cash assistance projects had already been finalized by the end of May 2025, the main operational difficulty was ensuring that beneficiaries withdrew their entitlements within the permitted timeframe. This required continuous follow-up and reminders, though no major deviations occurred.

¹ According to the refreshed data on data.unhcr.org

3. Systemic challenges in Hungary

In Hungary, systemic shortcomings in the welfare system continued to restrict longer-term solutions for refugees, leaving civil society actors overstretched. Services remained heavily concentrated in Budapest, while refugees outside the capital struggled with limited access, language barriers, and frequent cases of exploitation. Trust-building with clients in rural areas was hindered by infrequent personal contact, while cultural differences required program adjustments, especially in women's groups. Growing needs contrasted with limited resources, and administrative burdens further complicated service delivery.

4. Organizational and operational constraints in Hungary

Finally, organizational and operational challenges also arose, including delays in staff recruitment, high workloads, technical issues with reporting platforms, and ambiguities in contract interpretation. These factors collectively impacted programme implementation and required mitigation measures such as prioritization of urgent cases, closer cooperation with partners, cultural adaptation of activities, and renewed recruitment and retention efforts.

D. Lessons Learned and good practices

Please give a brief overview of any lessons learned and good practices identified during the reporting period.

Throughout the implementation of humanitarian activities in Ukraine, several valuable lessons and effective practices have emerged, enhancing both operational efficiency and assisted people impact.

1. Established procedures remain effective

Since this period was mainly about project closure and monitoring cash withdrawals, few new lessons were identified. The team relied on tried-and-tested procedures that had already worked well in earlier projects.

2. Collaboration and resource optimization

In light of shrinking donor engagement, HIA and its ACT Alliance partners applied creative solutions to sustain operations. Sharing resources (such as offices and services), exchanging knowledge through joint data analysis, and forming a Fundraising Working Group all proved to be strong practices. At the same time, strengthening the capacities of local partners (LIGA, ADVANCE) ensured that future programming could be more localized and sustainable.

3. Learning from program experience

Specific program experiences generated important insights. The veteran rehabilitation pilot provided a model for scale-up, emphasizing the value of suitable facilities, professional mental health support, and employment reintegration services. Other projects highlighted the usefulness of early monitoring visits, flexible data collection methods, and regular interim partner reports to anticipate problems and adjust in time.

4. Beneficiary-centered refugee support

Programs in Hungary showed that client-centered and participatory methods enhance effectiveness. Internal referral systems and close partner coordination improved service delivery, while labour forums and body-awareness sessions for women empowered participants and reduced risks of exploitation. One-on-one accompaniment and appointment reminders strengthened trust and continuity. Flexible case management, regular needs assessments, and all-staff learning platforms also stood out as valuable practices for maintaining quality and adapting to changing needs.

E. Feedback and accountability

Please give a short overview of the accountability and feedback initiatives you have implemented during the reporting period, together with operational and programmatic adjustments based on feedback received. Please refer to the nature and number of complaints received and resolution rate and response timeline.

Planned activities for the upcoming period aim to ensure continuity of support, strengthen localization efforts, and address both operational and programmatic challenges identified during the reporting phase.

1. Positive perceptions of cash and basic assistance

Post-distribution monitoring in Kamianske (Dnipropetrovska oblast) showed a high level of satisfaction with multi-purpose cash assistance, with beneficiaries primarily covering essential needs such as rent, medicines, and food. Flexible Small Grant projects were also confirmed as effective through ongoing monitoring.

2. Child- and family-centered services

Surveys and focus groups revealed very high levels of satisfaction with family support programs. At the “*Sure Start*” Children’s House, beneficiaries praised the services and suggested adding more creative activities to strengthen parent-child bonds. At the *Mother’s Home*, participants valued the staff and services but raised concerns about high utility costs in winter and weak internet connectivity.

3. Project evaluations and key findings

Key informant interviews under FCA 22051 indicated positive project impacts, while also surfacing unmet needs for future programming. For the *UHF III WASH project*, beneficiaries highlighted high satisfaction but recommended longer timelines and larger budgets to accommodate external challenges such as weather, shelling, and inflation.

4. Ongoing monitoring activities

Throughout the reporting period, HIA’s MEAL team conducted extensive monitoring: post-distribution monitoring of MPCA, key informant interviews with mothers at the Mother’s and Children’s Home, focus group discussions at the Sure Start Children’s Center, and field visits to psychosocial support projects. In addition, two psychosocial centers were newly equipped in Kyiv region, one project was completed, and nine continued implementation.

5. Strengthening feedback channels

Although structured mechanisms such as feedback forms remained underused, informal channels (email, Viber, in-person) provided several positive messages. Going forward, greater efforts will be required to raise awareness and encourage systematic use of formal feedback tools to ensure continuous program improvement.

E. Next steps and recommendations

Please provide major upcoming activities scheduled for the next reporting period, along with any programmatic and operational recommendations

1. Advancing localization and partnerships

A central focus will be the continued capacity-building of local partners, particularly LIGA and ADVANCE. Support will include policy development, due diligence, humanitarian training, and fundraising skills to prepare them for increased program ownership. In parallel, joint fundraising efforts with ACT Ukraine Forum members will be strengthened through funding trend analysis, the development of a coordinated fundraising strategy, and joint donor communication.

2. Key project-level priorities

Several project-related steps are planned under ongoing and newly proposed initiatives:

- *Veteran reintegration*: Scaling up psycho-social rehabilitation and labour market reintegration activities under ACT UKR251.
- *MFA437 24063*: Equipping social bakeries, advancing the design and construction of a bomb shelter in Kherson, repairing four educational institutions in Kyiv region, and repeating the procurement process for a youth sports club bus in Ternopil.
- *UHF VII*: Pending approval, HIA will rapidly implement cash-based and in-kind winterization support in Donetsk and Kherson oblasts.

3. Strengthening monitoring and communication

Five monitoring visits are planned for the next month, alongside the closure of one project report. An information booklet on Flexible Small Grant projects will also be developed to enhance visibility and communication.

4. Refugee support and outreach in Hungary

Planned activities include strengthening administrative support for clients, continuing individual case management and accompaniment, organizing further labour forums and women's group sessions, and conducting outreach to newly arrived clients. A focused needs assessment will help identify sustainable housing solutions, while partnerships will be reinforced to improve service accessibility and resource-sharing.

5. Programmatic and operational recommendations

- To support effective implementation, several cross-cutting recommendations were identified
- Digitalization of administrative processes to increase efficiency.

- Strengthened feedback mechanisms to encourage active beneficiary participation.
- Monitoring and clarifying the housing budget to ensure sustainability.
- Expanding human resources, particularly for specialized roles in child development, while addressing staff retention challenges.
- Supporting staff well-being through team-building, improved dynamics, and addressing cultural differences within project teams.

F. Appeal Financing

Please fill out information on Funds Received. Please, add rows as necessary.

Funds Received

Donor	Grant Amount (in USD)	Date Received	Inside or Outside the Appeal
ACT ALLIANCE	244,940.08 + 35,722.08	04.04.2025 17.07.2025	Inside

G. Progress to date

Please provide an update of total unique aid recipients reached to date by county and overall, as well as the new ones during the reporting period.

	#of new people reached during reporting period (disaggregated by gender)	# of total people reach throughout the programme (cumulative to date) (disaggregated by gender)
Overall	1397 females; 1445 males	2053 females; 1982 males
Ukraine	1397 females; 1445 males	2053 females; 1982 males
Hungary	-	-

Please provide an update against the appeal Results Framework indicators.

Appeal Indicators

Indicators	Activity Locations	Reached to date	Target	% progress
# of individuals with increased access to essential food items	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	3500	
# of people assisted with shelter and NFI in-kind support	Several Oblast in Ukraine	2831	4000	
# of people with assisted with winter heating	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	800	
# of people received protection assistance	Several Oblast in Ukraine	773	1500	
# of individuals supported with cash assistance addressing their basic needs	Several Oblast in Ukraine	431	3000	
# of people participated in employment promotion	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	50	
# of people with increased access to basic WASH services and supplies	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	4000	
# information products distributed to the affected population through a variety of mechanisms on humanitarian program planning, functioning and progress	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	2870	
# partner organizations with an operational complaint and		1	2	

feedback mechanism				
# international, national, regional and local coordination bodies, authorities and partners in which HIA is participating	Several Oblast in Ukraine	No activity so far	10	
# of needs and sector specific assessment reports		No activity so far	4	

H. Photos

Please include 3-4 photos of your key actions that occurred during the reporting period



Monitoring visit to the Center for Social Projects "I Want to Live".



Camp for children from orphanages, implemented by the charitable organization You are an Angel.



CO project "Charitable Foundation Save Ukraine."