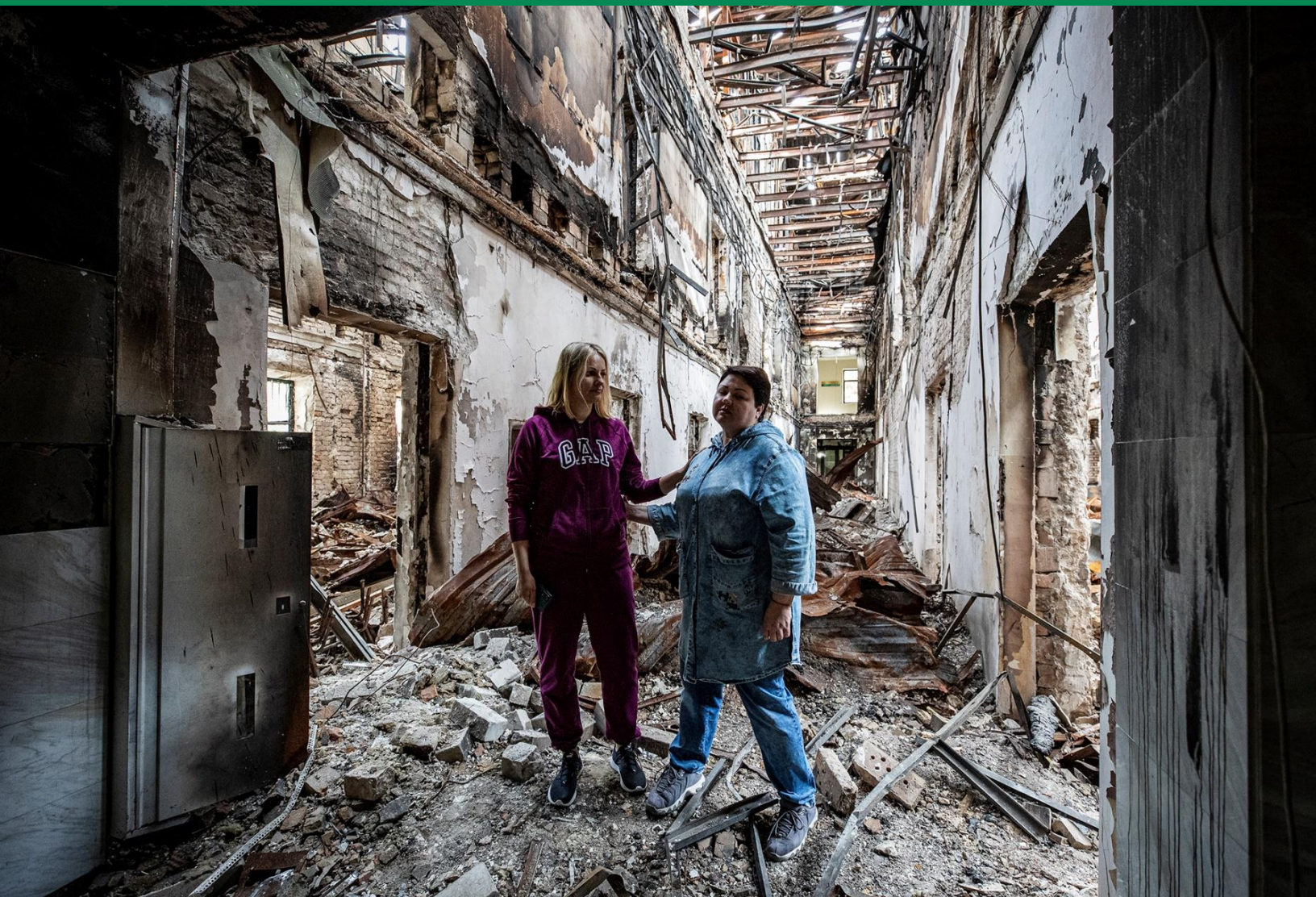


Conflict Escalation in Ukraine

September 2025



Country/Location: Ukraine

Title of the emergency: Conflict Escalation in Ukraine

Situation Report No. 6

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On September 7, Russia has hit Ukraine with **the largest air attack** since the war began, killing at least four people -including an infant- across the country and setting dozens of buildings on fire in the capital. More than 800 drones and missiles were launched on civilian areas, including **Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipro, and Mykolaiv**. This weekend's attacks are in line with the recent escalation of the conflict, including the tragic killing of two humanitarian colleagues from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) last week.

Aid workers and civilians should never be a target.

As the war continues into its third year, humanitarian needs are sharply increasing, particularly among women, children, the elderly, and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The **school reopening**, the looming **winterization challenges**, and the **surge in airstrikes** all underscore the need for sustained, flexible, and gender-sensitive humanitarian response.

The aim of this document is to share and coordinate the response within the ChildFund Alliance and with other partners to mitigate the suffering of children, families and other citizens in Ukraine. The actions here proposed are aligned with the UN response to the current emergency.

Context Overview

The humanitarian situation in Ukraine remains critical and protracted, marked by ongoing hostilities, mass displacement, infrastructure destruction, and growing protection concerns. The war continues to severely impact civilians—especially in frontline and recently de-occupied areas—undermining access to basic services, limiting livelihood opportunities, and exposing communities to repeated trauma and violence.

In 2025, an estimated **14.6 million people** across Ukraine, including over **6.5 million women and girls** and **3 million children**, requires humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs (OCHA, Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, 2025). The compounded effects of armed conflict, economic disruption, forced displacement, and seasonal risks are disproportionately affecting **women-headed households, children, persons with disabilities**, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In areas of ongoing insecurity, residents face persistent barriers to accessing safe water, healthcare, education, and protection services.

The escalation of **missile and drone attacks** in recent months—targeting both urban centres and rural settlements—has further disrupted civilian life and undermined already fragile systems. Critical infrastructure such as water networks, energy grids, and schools continues to be targeted, exacerbating humanitarian needs and threatening the population's resilience to future shocks.

With the **start of the new school year the 1st of September**, hundreds of thousands of children face an uncertain return to education. Many school buildings remain damaged or only partially operational, while others lack adequate shelter and protection measures. In frontline oblasts, a significant number of students continue to rely on distance learning, despite limited connectivity, electricity outages, and high psychosocial distress.

Additionally, **preparations for winterization** are underway in anticipation of sub-zero temperatures from October onwards. Heating systems, insulation, and access to warm clothing and hygiene items are essential to prevent further displacement and health deterioration during the winter months. However, ongoing attacks, displacement, and funding gaps continue to delay the procurement and distribution of life-saving materials in critical areas.

To better understand the evolving needs, WeWorld has recently conducted a **multi-sectoral gender-focused assessment** in Mykolaiv, Kharkiv, and Kyiv oblasts. The findings are compiled in the report "*Her Future at Risk – Gender-Transformative WASH Programming in Wartime Ukraine*", launched at the Ukraine

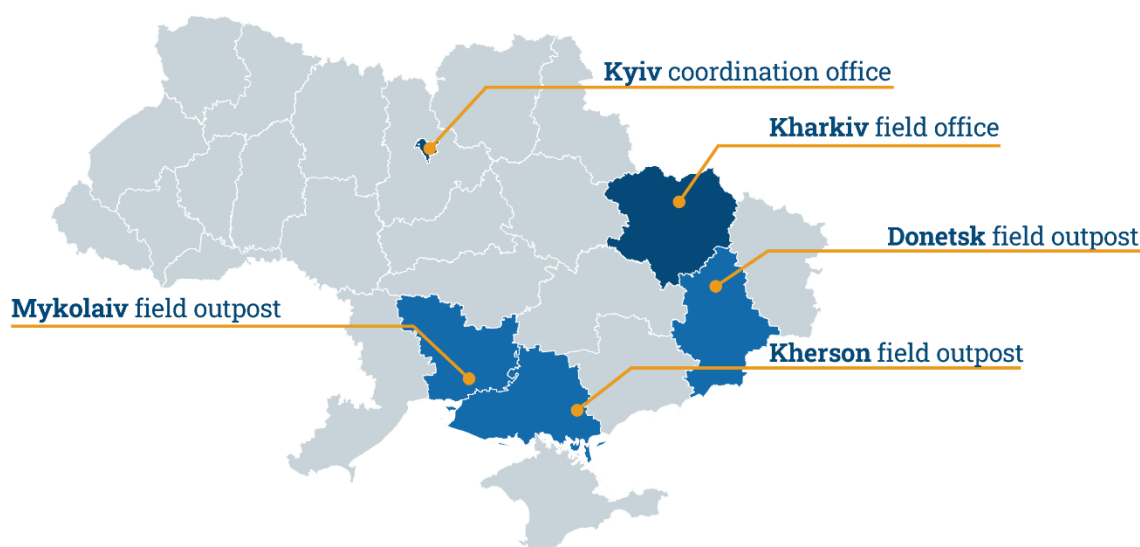
Recovery Conference 2025 in Rome. The study highlights the specific challenges women and girls face in accessing safe, dignified WASH services, including menstrual hygiene management, and calls for integrated, gender-transformative responses across sectors. It also underscores the urgent need for coordination between humanitarian actors and local authorities to ensure that essential services—such as hygiene kit distributions and psychosocial support—are inclusive, accessible, and conflict-sensitive.

The cumulative impact of active conflict, exposure to trauma, weakened public systems, and seasonal risks means that **millions of Ukrainians remain at risk of falling into acute humanitarian need** unless urgent and sustained assistance is delivered.

Additionally, **Ukraine is now among the most mine-contaminated countries in the world**, with over one third of its territory potentially affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). This contamination poses a daily threat to civilians—particularly in rural and frontline areas—and severely hampers humanitarian access, safe movement, agricultural recovery, and the return of displaced populations.

Overview of WeWorld Response

WeWorld has been actively engaged in Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, launching its emergency response in March 2022 with the support of the ChildFund Alliance and in cooperation with ChildFund Deutschland. Initial operations focused on aiding civilians fleeing conflict in the eastern regions, providing critical life-saving assistance such as food, clean water, and essential household items. By quickly mobilizing local partners, WeWorld established a permanent presence in Ukraine, enabling both emergency relief and early recovery programming, with a strong emphasis on supporting women and children.



Currently, WeWorld operates in **Kyiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Kherson** Oblasts, and plans resuming operations in **Mykolaiv** Oblast within few weeks. The organization works closely with communities who have remained in conflict-affected areas, as well as with those returning to previously occupied zones. Guided by a localization approach, WeWorld partners with local NGOs and civil society organizations to ensure that aid delivery is context-sensitive, community-driven, and sustainable. In response to the

ongoing crisis, WeWorld prioritizes interventions in Education, Protection, Shelter and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) sectors. Collaborating with national partners, the organization delivers timely, inclusive support across these areas. Its integrated emergency and recovery efforts include the distribution of hygiene kits – with special attention to the needs of women, girls, the elderly, and other marginalized groups– and the rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, particularly in healthcare settings. These activities align with Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) standards and employ the WASH FIT (Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool) framework. To strengthen local infrastructure, WeWorld has also equipped public utility providers (Vodokanals) with essential machinery and tools to restore water, sanitation, and wastewater systems in frontline areas. These efforts not only save lives but also ensure that WASH services are accessible, safe, inclusive, and respectful of the dignity and diverse needs of affected communities. At the intersection of the Health and WASH sectors, WeWorld contributes to the recovery and rehabilitation of vital medical infrastructure. This includes the repair – and where necessary, full reconstruction – of healthcare facilities, with a focus on restoring water and sanitation systems to meet the highest standards. These improvements are critical to maintaining access to quality healthcare during both emergency and post-emergency phases, especially for the most vulnerable.

Next Steps

WeWorld's response in Ukraine focuses on four key sectors: **WASH; Education and Protection (child protection, MHPSS, peace education); Humanitarian Demining; Emergency Shelter/NFI**. These sectors are addressed not in isolation, but through a **multi-sectoral and integrated approach**, ensuring that humanitarian assistance responds holistically to the evolving needs of affected communities. In a context marked by ongoing conflict, mass displacement, and recurrent attacks on civilian infrastructure, such integration is critical. Vulnerabilities are complex and interconnected, and only a coordinated response can meaningfully address the compounded risks people face every day.

As Ukraine continues to face one of the gravest humanitarian crises in Europe and in the World, the **protection of displaced and conflict-affected populations remains a core priority**. WeWorld ensures that all interventions are grounded in **protection principles**, promoting **safety, dignity, and inclusive access** to services and with our conflict sensitive approach. Protection mainstreaming is embedded across all sectors of our response, from the distribution of hygiene kits and school supplies to mine risk education and the provision of shelter assistance.

Key elements of our intervention include:

- First-line emergency support through **distribution of core relief items** (NFI, non-food items);
- Promotion of **safe access to education** and child protection services including mental health and peace education;
- Support to **WASH infrastructure repair**, hygiene promotion, and menstrual hygiene management;
- Deployment of **mobile protection teams** and delivery of **mine risk education** in areas with confirmed contamination;
- Rehabilitation of residential buildings and essential public infrastructure damaged by bombardments.

All activities are implemented in line with **international humanitarian standards**, and in coordination with the relevant **UN-led clusters** (WASH, Education, Protection, Shelter, Mine Action), as well as national and international actors, to ensure **complementarity, efficiency, and accountability**

➤ EDUCATION AND PROTECTION (CHILD PROTECTION, MHPSS, PEACE EDUCATION)

The ongoing war in Ukraine has had a devastating impact on children's access to education, their mental health, and their overall safety. As of mid-2025, **over 5 million children** remain affected by disruptions to formal education, exposure to trauma, and the collapse of support systems. Many schools have been damaged or destroyed, while others operate only partially or remotely due to insecurity and infrastructure loss. In addition, children—especially those who are displaced—face increasing protection risks, including psychological distress, violence, and neglect.

WeWorld's education and child protection interventions aim to provide **safe, inclusive, and supportive environments** for children and adolescents through community-based approaches that integrate psychosocial support, access to learning, and **peace education**. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups, including **IDPs, children with disabilities, orphaned children, and those living in rural or frontline areas**.

Planned Activities:

1. Establishment of Child and Adolescent-Friendly Spaces (CFS/AFS):

WeWorld sets up dedicated child-friendly and adolescent-friendly spaces to provide **psychosocial, recreational, and material support** to children and young people affected by the conflict. These spaces are equipped to address their emotional and cognitive needs through **individual and group sessions**, creative expression, structured play, and educational games. The spaces help enhance resilience and coping mechanisms in the face of **war-related trauma and loss**. Needs assessments are conducted to guide improvements in **infrastructure, staffing, and educational materials**.

2. Provision of MHPSS for Women and Children in Safe Spaces and Community Centers:

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) is delivered through a network of **community centers, mobile units, women's safe spaces, orphanages**, and informal hubs. Activities include **individual counseling, group therapy, and peer support**—with a specific focus on women caregivers and children, who often bear the psychological burden of displacement, separation, and violence. Mobile teams are deployed in hard-to-reach areas to ensure equitable access.

3. Peace Education Initiatives:

In response to the widespread psychological distress and disruption to social cohesion, WeWorld integrates **peace education/social cohesion modules** into its child protection and education programming. These include **non-violent communication, conflict resolution, emotional literacy**, and collaborative activities that promote dialogue and reconciliation. Peace education is conducted through trained facilitators in both formal and non-formal learning environments and is adapted to local contexts in coordination with school authorities and community leaders.

Target:

Approximately **3,500 children and adolescents**, along with 950 women caregivers and educators.

Budget:

300,000 USD

All activities are implemented in coordination with the **Education and Protection Clusters**, local education departments, and child protection actors. The approach emphasizes **community ownership**, cultural relevance, and sustainability, ensuring that children's rights to **learn, play, heal, and grow in safety** are upheld, even in the midst of conflict.

➤ WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

In Ukraine, access to safe water and sanitation services remains a critical challenge, particularly in **conflict-affected and frontline oblasts**. Repeated attacks have severely damaged water supply networks, healthcare infrastructure, and public utilities, leaving **millions of civilians exposed to health risks** due to lack of clean water and functioning hygiene facilities. Internally displaced persons (IDPs), elderly people, persons with disabilities, and families living in informal or overcrowded shelters are among the most vulnerable.

WASH needs are further exacerbated by the deterioration of public infrastructure and seasonal factors such as **extreme cold**, which hinders the use of water and sewage systems. In many rural or semi-urban areas, essential infrastructure—including **heating systems, sanitation blocks, and water pumping stations**—has been partially or entirely destroyed, leaving communities without basic hygiene and sanitation.

In response, WeWorld is scaling up targeted interventions in the WASH sector to ensure that **vulnerable families and key institutions** (such as health facilities and collective shelters) regain access to essential services that uphold health, dignity, and resilience.

Planned Activities:

1. Distribution of Tailored Hygiene Kits:

WeWorld distributes hygiene kits to vulnerable individuals, prioritizing women, elderly people, and persons with disabilities. The kits are **customised** based on the specific needs of each target group and include **menstrual hygiene items**, in line with WASH Cluster guidance. Distribution is accompanied by **awareness sessions on hygiene practices and MHM**.

2. Rehabilitation of WASH Facilities in Health Centers:

Based on field assessments, WeWorld supports the **repair and upgrade** of damaged water supply, sewage, and heating systems in **healthcare facilities**. These works aim to restore the operational capacity of essential services, reduce infection risks, and improve patient and resident conditions.

3. Rehabilitation of Water Supply Networks:

In cooperation with local **Vodokanal (municipal water utilities)** and **other local authorities**, WeWorld supports the **repair and modernization** of damaged water systems in affected communities. This includes provision of spare parts, equipment, and technical assistance to ensure reliable access to **safe and sufficient water** and to strengthen local capacity for ongoing maintenance.

Target:

Approximately **15,000 unique beneficiaries**, including IDPs, conflict-affected families, and institutional users (patients, schoolchildren, healthcare workers).

Budget:

400,000 USD

The intervention is implemented in coordination with the **WASH Cluster**, local authorities, and health departments, and aligned with humanitarian standards. **Community engagement**, including consultations and feedback mechanisms, guides implementation and ensures that services are appropriate, inclusive, and sustainable.

➤ HUMANITARIAN DEMINING AND RISK EDUCATION

Ukraine is currently one of the most mine-contaminated countries in the world, with over 30% of its territory potentially affected by **anti-personnel mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and other explosive remnants of war (ERW)**. Contamination is particularly severe in **southern and eastern oblasts**, where active fighting, repeated occupation, and population return overlap. These hazards pose a **daily threat to civilians**, especially **children, farmers, IDPs, and returning families**, undermining safety, delaying reconstruction, and hindering the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Beyond physical danger, the lack of reliable, localized information has led to **high-risk behavior and misinformation**, particularly in rural communities and recently liberated areas. A coordinated and **community-centered response** to mine action is urgently needed, combining **survey, education, protection, and local planning** under a conflict-sensitive lens.

Planned Activities:

1. Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE):

WeWorld implements **community-based and school-based EORE** in high-risk and newly accessible areas, using a variety of methods—**interactive sessions, flashcards, scenario-based learning, and mobile tools**—to promote safe behaviour among children and adults. Special sessions are tailored for schools, with the establishment of **“EO Safety Corners”**, age-appropriate materials, and **cascade training of teachers** to serve as EORE facilitators. Inclusive approaches ensure the participation of **girls, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups**.

2. Community Engagement and Participatory Planning:

The project supports the organization of **monthly EORE Coordination Spaces** in areas such as **Mykolaiv and Kherson Regions**, fostering joint planning and knowledge sharing among NGOs, state agencies, and local stakeholders. Communities are involved in identifying contamination zones and recovery priorities, contributing to trust-building and resilience.

3. Support to Local Systems and Sustainability:

Through **institutional partnerships with education departments and the National Mine Action Authority (NMAC)**, WeWorld integrates EORE into school curricula and protection strategies. A **Training of Trainers (ToT) system** ensures sustainability and local ownership of risk education efforts.

Target:

Approximately **2,500 unique beneficiaries**, including schoolchildren, teachers, parents, community leaders, and returnees in high-contamination zones.

Budget:

350,000 USD

All interventions are conducted in line with the **International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)** and the Ukrainian national strategy, applying **Do No Harm principles, conflict sensitivity, and inclusion of gender, age, and disability considerations**.

Humanitarian mine action is more than clearance—it is about **restoring safety, dignity, and trust** in war-affected communities. By placing communities at the center of risk education and planning, WeWorld contributes to both immediate protection and long-term recovery.

➤ EMERGENCY SHELTER AND NFI

As of mid-2025, millions of people in Ukraine—especially those living in **frontline and recently de-occupied oblasts**—continue to face challenges related to inadequate shelter and the lack of essential non-food items (NFIs). Constant **missile and drone attacks** have severely damaged homes, apartment blocks, and public facilities. Families—particularly **internally displaced persons (IDPs), female-headed households, the elderly, and persons with disabilities**—are struggling to survive in **damaged, overcrowded, or makeshift shelters** with limited access to heating, water, or sanitation.

Harsh winter conditions and limited access to energy sources further exacerbate vulnerability. Many communities lack stable electricity or gas connections, and rely on **solid fuels (wood, briquettes, coal)** or emergency heating methods to cope with sub-zero temperatures. In this context, emergency shelter support and timely distribution of adapted NFIs are essential to restore dignity and reduce health and protection risks.

Planned Activities:

1. Distribution of Winter Emergency Kits:

WeWorld will provide **winterised NFI kits** tailored to the needs of vulnerable groups (children, women, elderly, and people with disabilities). Kits will include thermal blankets, winter clothing, hygiene supplies, and other essential household items. Distributions will cover both families in private accommodation and those hosted in **collective shelters, orphanages, and hubs**.

2. Provision of Solid Fuel:

In coordination with local authorities and community-based structures, **solid fuel (wood, briquettes, coal)** will be distributed to families living in remote or heavily affected areas without access to stable heating. Each household will receive enough fuel to meet basic heating needs throughout the winter period.

3. Repair of Damaged Houses (Cash-for-Shelter Modality):

Vulnerable families whose homes have been **partially damaged by shelling** will receive **cash assistance** to carry out essential repairs (windows, roofs, doors, insulation), enabling them to remain safely in their homes during the winter. This approach also supports **local market recovery** and increases community participation in the recovery process.

Target:

Approximately **6,500 unique beneficiaries**, including IDPs, returnees, and host community members in high-risk areas.

Budget:

500,000 USD

Beneficiary selection will be based on transparent vulnerability criteria, including the extent of housing damage, household income, and specific needs (e.g., presence of children, elderly or disabled members, female- or child-headed households). Community engagement will be central to the process, with local leaders involved in identifying needs and ensuring inclusive and accountable implementation.

All activities will be implemented in coordination with the **Shelter and NFI Cluster**, local authorities, and humanitarian partners, in compliance with Sphere Standards and humanitarian principles.

Sector of intervention	Required actions	Funding Appeal (USD)	Beneficiaries
Education and Protection (Child Protection, MHPSS, Peace Education)	Establishment of Child and Adolescent-Friendly Spaces (CFS/AFS) Provision of MHPSS for Women and Children in Safe Spaces and Community Centers Peace Education Initiatives	300,000	Approximately 3,500 children and adolescents, along with 950 women caregivers and educators
WASH	Distribution of Tailored Hygiene Kits Rehabilitation of WASH Facilities in Health Centers Rehabilitation of Water Supply Networks	400,000	Approximately 15,000 beneficiaries, including IDPs, conflict-affected families, and institutional users (patients, schoolchildren, healthcare workers)
Humanitarian Demining and Risk Education	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) Community Engagement and Participatory Planning Support to Local Systems and Sustainability	350,000	Approximately 2,500 beneficiaries, including schoolchildren, teachers, parents, community leaders, and returnees in high-contamination zones
Emergency Shelter and NFI	Distribution of Winter Emergency Kits Provision of Solid Fuel Repair of Damaged Houses (Cash-for-Shelter Modality)	500,000	Approximately 6,500 beneficiaries, including IDPs, returnees, and host community members in high-risk areas
		1,550,000	Approximately 27,500 beneficiaries

To carry out an effective intervention in the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis, that will adopt a multi-sectoral and integrated approach and will ensure safe and adequate access to basic services providing assistance to approximately 27,500 beneficiaries, many of whom women, children and IDPs, an additional 1,550,000 USD is needed. WeWorld was able to already mobilize 550,000 USD.

Ukraine SitRep, as of September 2025

WeWorld response will continue to adapt to the evolving situation and people's needs accordingly