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After three years of war, funding shortfalls in Ukraine risk long-term impact on displaced communities

Three years into the full-scale war in Ukraine, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) emphasises the need for sustained international support to prevent worsening humanitarian conditions and long-term challenges to the country's recovery and stability.

As the conflict continues, more than 3.4 million people remain displaced, facing deteriorating living conditions, job losses, and limited access to essential services. Civilian casualties also remain high—January 2025 saw at least 139 civilians killed and 738 injured, a 27% increase from the previous year.

The impact of the war extends beyond immediate humanitarian needs. Gender-based violence is on the rise, with limited access to support for survivors. Landmine contamination and other explosive hazards pose significant risks, restricting movement, agricultural production, and economic recovery. Thousands of injured individuals require ongoing medical and psychological care. At the same time, housing shortages persist, leaving many in overcrowded and deteriorating shelters initially designed for short-term use. Reconstruction efforts remain insufficient to meet demand, while economic instability continues to limit employment opportunities, leaving many families struggling to make ends meet.

“Now is not the time to step back from Ukraine. Continued international support is critical to ensuring people receive the assistance they need. Communities have endured three years of war, losing homes, livelihoods, and loved ones. Sustained humanitarian funding is essential to help them rebuild their lives,” underlines **Charlotte Slente**, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council.

Growing needs amid declining funding

Despite ongoing humanitarian needs, funding for Ukraine has steadily declined—from \$3.65 billion in 2023 to \$2.5 billion in 2024, a 31.5% decrease. The recent freeze of US funding may further limit the resources available to assist those affected.

“Through our programmes, we see that many displaced people in Ukraine are struggling with limited support. Some are returning to unsafe areas, including locations under near-daily bombardment, simply because they feel they have no other option. Without sustained assistance, unsafe returns are likely to increase, putting lives at risk and further straining humanitarian resources. A lasting recovery for Ukraine depends on long-term investments in housing, infrastructure, and economic resilience. Without these commitments, many will remain in limbo, unable to rebuild their lives or regain stability,” says **Julian Zakrzewski**, Country Director of the Danish Refugee Council Ukraine.

Further information:

Danish Refugee Council Press
Phone: +45 28 11 67 27
press@drc.ngo

- drc.ngo
- facebook.com/danishrefugeecouncil
- twitter.com/DRC_ngo

The Danish Refugee Council is a leading, international humanitarian displacement organisation, supporting refugees and internally displaced persons during displacement, in exile, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. We provide protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance. We support displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included into hosting societies — and we work with communities, civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and peaceful coexistence. Founded in Denmark in 1956, 7,500 staff, 6,200 volunteers.