



Collateral

**THE HUMAN COST OF
EXPLOSIVE VIOLENCE IN UKRAINE**

Stratonavtiv St / Donetsk

FEBRUARY
2013



Stratonavtiv St / Donetsk

OCTOBER
2014

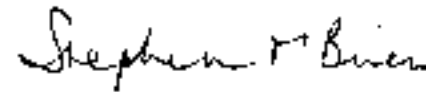


Collateral

Every day, in a range of different contexts around the world, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas causes immense harm to civilians. Their use in towns and cities in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, the occupied Palestinian territory, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, amongst others, has resulted in countless civilian casualties, widespread displacement and the destruction of vital infrastructure upon which civilians depend. Too often, civilian casualties and the destruction of civilian homes and livelihoods are accepted as “collateral damage” – a sad but inevitable side effect of war. We must challenge this narrative: the humanitarian impact of the use of bombs, rockets, mortars and other explosive weapons in towns and cities is predictable and can often be avoided.


Sometimes it is difficult to relate to those in need, especially when they are far away and their stories are reduced to numbers and statistics. But behind each and every statistic, headline, article or report on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, there are dozens, hundreds and sometimes thousands of individual stories. Sometimes we need to be confronted on a more personal level to remind ourselves that it is a person’s life behind every single number. This publication does exactly that. The individual stories told in this publication and the images of Dirk-Jan Visser speak for themselves. In a powerful and highly personal manner, the photographs give a human face to the numbers. We are mere spectators, offered a rare snapshot into the lives of ordinary people who are caught up in a tragic situation.

It is our sincere hope that these stories and photographs will move people from spectators to actors. The humanitarian harm caused by explosive weapons in populated areas, in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world, needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. It is time for states to work with UN agencies and civil society towards a political commitment that will set stronger standards and ultimately strengthen the protection of civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.



STEPHEN O'BRIEN

United Nations Emergency Relief
Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General
for Humanitarian Affairs



JAN GRUTERS

General Director
PAX

Spartak neighbourhood / Donetsk
FEBRUARY
2013



Spartak neighbourhood / Donetsk

OCTOBER
2014



Sleeping with your clothes on

“WE ASK YOU TO INFLUENCE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE MAKING THIS WAR AND SHOW THEM WHAT’S HAPPENING HERE. WE JUST WANT PEACE. WE’VE BEEN WORKING ALL OUR LIVES. ALL WE WANT IS WORK AND PEACE.”

Nadejda (56), Donetsk

Can you imagine sleeping with your clothes on in case the shelling starts at night and you need to flee? Can you imagine seeing your child terrified of thunder because it reminds him of bombardments? Can you imagine what it would be like to be seven months pregnant and have to flee your home because it is constantly shelled? Or having to leave your parents behind because it is too dangerous to stay but they are too old and infirm to leave? Can you imagine how you would feel if your home was destroyed and you had absolutely nothing left? Or if you reached a point where you saw dead bodies in the street but did nothing about it?

In June 2015, we travelled to both Government Controlled Areas and Non-Government Controlled Areas in Ukraine. We spoke at random to people in the street, to people gathered in IDP collective centres, local NGOs and volunteer organizations, and to people working the land, leaning over their balconies or sitting in their gardens. Our aim was to find out how the use of explosive weapons in towns and cities has made an impact, and continues to make an impact, on their lives. We met people who have been hard hit. Their stories are disturbing but by no means exceptional. They reveal the devastating and predictable pattern of harm that occurs whenever explosive weapons are used in populated areas.

Through this publication we would like you to meet some of these people and read their stories. We hope that this will motivate you to join others in calling for urgent and decisive action to prevent similar harm in the future. We call upon states and other parties to conflict to break this pattern and to prevent the use in populated areas of explosive weapons with a wide-area effect.

OCTOBER 2011

Marshala Zhukova Ave
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015
Marshala Zhukova Ave
Donetsk.



OCTOBER 2011

Marshala Zhukova Ave
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015
Marshala Zhukova Ave
Donetsk.



OCTOBER 2011

Bridge between Kyivs'kyi Ave and Zlitna St
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015

Bridge between Kyivs'kyi Ave and Zlitna St
Donetsk.



ГРАДОАРМІЯ
КРАСНОАРМІЙСЬК
ДІПЛОМАТИЧСЬК
ДІПЛОМАТИЧСЬК
ДІПЛОМАТИЧСЬК
К. 100
К. 100
АВДІВКА
АВДІВКА

OCTOBER 2011

Manezhnyi Ave
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015

Manezhnyi Ave
Donetsk.



OCTOBER 2011

P'yatnyts'koho St
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015

P'yatnyts'koho St
Donetsk.



OCTOBER 2011

Stratonavtiv St
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015

Stratonavtiv St
Donetsk.



OCTOBER 2011

Stratonavtiv St
Donetsk.



JUNE 2015

Stratonavtiv St
Donetsk.



Explosive violence: a global problem

**“WE HAVE A SAYING
- HOPE DIES LAST.”**

Elena (32), Sloviansk

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS: A REAL AND PRESENT DANGER TO CIVILIANS

The heavy shelling of towns and cities has been common practice in Eastern Ukraine since the outbreak of conflict in April 2014. Large calibre artillery, Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) and other explosive weapons have caused death and destruction across the Donbass region, on Ukraine’s far eastern fringe. Many civilians live in fear of attack; they are often forced to shelter in basements for long periods of time while their homes, workplaces, schools and hospitals are being damaged or destroyed above ground. Others have been forced to flee their homes and now face an uncertain future as internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees. Explosive remnants of war (ERW) pose a further serious threat to civilians and will remain a threat until they are removed, a process that can sometimes take decades.

When explosive weapons are used in towns and cities, the toll on civilians is unacceptably high, be it in Ukraine or elsewhere in the world. Research by the British NGO Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) found that globally more than 32,662 civilians were reported as killed or injured by explosive weapons in 2014.¹ This was a 52 per cent increase in the number of civilian casualties compared with 2011. When explosive weapons were used in populated areas, 92 per cent of casualties were civilians. This publication seeks to put a human face on these figures in order to illustrate the devastating impact on civilians of explosive weapons used in towns and cities.

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS: AN INCREASING CONCERN

In recent years, the civilian harm and widespread destruction caused by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas have attracted increasing concern within the international community. Since 2009, the United Nations Secretary-General has consistently drawn attention to the humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.² He has repeatedly called on all parties to conflict – national armed forces and non-state armed groups – to avoid using explosive

weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas, and he has recommended that the Security Council, whenever relevant, expressly calls upon parties to conflict to refrain from such use.

Forty countries have so far publicly expressed concern about this pressing humanitarian issue.³ The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several United Nations actors including UNICEF, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, UNMAS and OCHA have also expressed public concern. The International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), of which PAX is a founding member, is an NGO partnership calling for immediate action to prevent human suffering from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.⁴

TYPES OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS AND THEIR IMPACT

Explosive weapons include explosive ordnance such as mortar bombs, rockets, tank grenades and aircraft bombs and missiles, as well as improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Despite a large variation in effect, function, design and means of delivery, explosive weapons broadly share certain basic characteristics. They contain a high explosive substance and, when detonated, they project shrapnel, create heat and produce a blast wave. This creates a distinct pattern in the damage that these weapons cause. The zone of blast and fragmentation has the potential to kill, injure or damage anyone or anything within that zone. In other words, explosive weapons have indiscriminate effects within their blast and fragmentation zone.

When explosive weapons are used in populated areas, the level of civilian harm is usually very high. Damage is particularly high when explosive weapons with a wide-area effect are used. Wide-area effects occur from weapons that have a large fragmentation or blast radius or that are inaccurate, from weapons systems that fire multiple explosive weapons at an area, or from a combination of these three characteristics. Since these weapons affect a large area on the ground, their use in areas where civilians are concentrated is extremely problematic.

HUMAN COST OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN POPULATED AREAS

The vast majority of people affected by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas are civilians. Many are killed or suffer complex injuries that may prove fatal or life-changing. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas results in physical and/or psychological harm in the form of blast and fragmentation injuries, crush injuries, burns, trauma and post-traumatic stress disorders (the last two can affect those not physically injured).⁵ Such harm requires emergency and specialist medical treatment, rehabilitation, and psycho-social support services, which are often unavailable during conflict and even after hostilities have ended.

In addition to these immediate effects, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas has a severe long-term humanitarian impact: it destroys housing and the infrastructure on which civilians depend, such as hospitals, clinics, and water and electricity supply systems. Livelihoods are also devastated as commercial property and means of production (factories, livestock, etc.) are damaged or destroyed in attacks involving explosive weapons.

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is a major driver of displacement as people are forced to flee due to fear of, or as a result of, explosive weapon attacks.⁶ Furthermore, the ability of displaced persons to return to their place of origin is often impeded by damage to housing and vital infrastructure and by the potential presence of ERW.

REPERCUSSIONS OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS ON DAILY LIFE

Globally, the use of explosive weapons is the leading cause of damage to healthcare facilities during conflict and armed violence.⁷ For many civilians caught up in conflict or armed violence, access to healthcare is made impossible because the use of explosive weapons has left hospitals and clinics damaged, destroyed or inaccessible, or because healthcare personnel have been killed or supplies cut off. Reduced access to healthcare has

severe repercussions for the broader civilian population and not just for those injured by explosive weapons.

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas can also interrupt or block access to education due to damage to facilities, direct harm to teaching personnel or the fear of harm. In some places, families choose not to send their children to school for significant periods of time because of the fear of explosive weapon attacks; teachers often stay at home for the same reason.

WHEN HOSTILITIES END, THE DANGER CONTINUES

The use of explosive weapons often leaves behind ERW, which can continue to pose a serious threat to civilians for decades after hostilities have ended. Children in particular are at risk of being killed or maimed by ERW. Furthermore, ERW can deprive the civilian population of access to land, schools, water points, religious sites and other locations necessary for their well-being. Globally, as many as 7.9 million people live in close proximity to areas contaminated with mines or ERW, and an additional 4.7 million people, are at risk as a result of seasonal migration through mine- or ERW-affected corridors.⁸

¹ Action on Armed Violence, *Explosive States: Monitoring Explosive Violence in 2014*. It should be noted that AOV's sampling of news media in the English language does not reflect every casualty, but their database is intended to be an indicator of the scale and patterns of civilian harm. For more information, see www.aovv.org.uk.

² See, for example, United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict* (29 May 2009) S/2009/277, para. 36, available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2009/277; United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict* (18 June 2015) S/2015/453, paras 30-36, 63-65, available at http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/453.

³ www.INEW.org/acknowledgements.

⁴ INEW was founded by: Action on Armed Violence, Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, PAX, Medact, Norwegian People's Aid, Oxfam and Save the Children; www.inew.org.

⁵ For a study on specific injuries caused by explosive weapons, see Handicap International, *Causes and types of injuries encountered by Handicap International while working with Internally Displaced Persons in Syria: a focus on the impact of explosive weapons* (January 2014), available at: http://www.inew.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/hi_factsheet-syria_21_01_2014_en.pdf.

⁶ United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict* (18 June 2015) S/2015/453, para. 34.

⁷ ICRC, *Health Care in Danger: A Sixteen Country Study* (July 2011), available at <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/report/hcid-report-2011-08-10.htm>.

⁸ United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Assistance in Mine Action* (forthcoming 2015), para. 3; United Nations Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for Mine Action (2015).



Destroyed market place at Marshala Zhukova Ave.

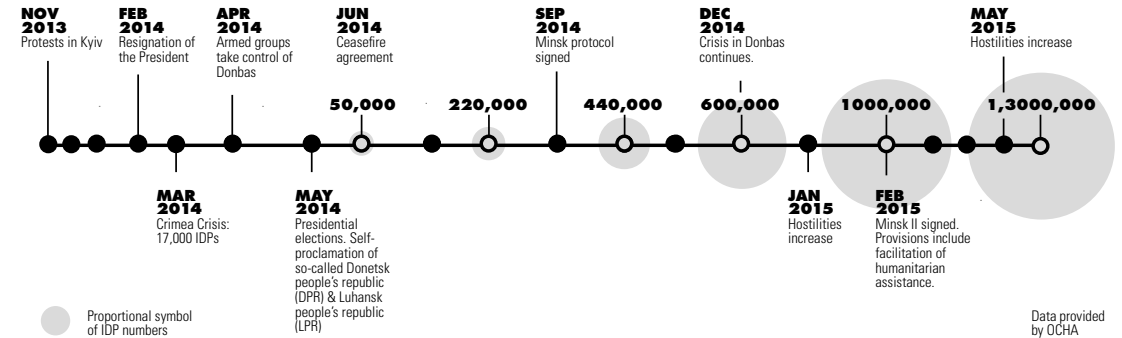
Explosive violence in Ukraine

“THE SHELLING WAS RIGHT IN THE CENTRE WHERE MY APARTMENT IS. IT USED TO LOOK OVER A SQUARE BUT NOW THERE’S NOTHING LEFT; NOTHING LEFT OF THE SQUARE, OR THE BEAUTIFUL PARK NEARBY.”

Tatyana (28), Sviatohirsk

HOSTILITIES CONTINUE

Since the political crisis in Ukraine escalated into armed conflict between Government forces and armed groups in Eastern Ukraine in April 2014, the population of this region has become increasingly vulnerable. A deal aimed at ending the fighting in Eastern Ukraine was agreed following talks in Minsk on 11-12 February 2015. According to this so called “Minsk Package of Measures”, a ceasefire came into effect on 15 February 2015 under the auspices of the OSCE.¹ The deal involves the withdrawal of heavy weapons from front line areas. While the conflict in Donbass initially waned following the signing of the agreement, subsequent months saw a renewed intensification along the contact line, resulting in a surge in humanitarian needs. Ongoing hostilities have been punctuated by heavy shelling in towns and cities. At the time of writing, prospects for implementing the agreement’s far-reaching political components remain uncertain.



HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

As of 10 July 2015, more than 6,700 people, including more than 2,500 civilians, are documented as killed and almost 17,000 as wounded in the Ukraine conflict. However, the true figures are likely to be higher since access to conflict-affected areas is restricted.² Approximately 5 million people have been identified by the United Nations as in need of humanitarian assistance.

There are around 1.4 million registered IDPs, and over 9270,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries.³ The majority of Ukraine's displaced people originate from areas such as Donetsk and Mariupol, which have seen intense fighting and the repeated use of explosive weapons in populated areas by all parties to the conflict.

According to AOAV's research, Ukraine was the seventh most-affected country by explosive violence in 2014, mostly through the frequent use of large-calibre artillery and multiple rocket launchers. All parties to the conflict used explosive weapons in populated areas, including cluster munitions, which are banned by the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions.⁴

Further research by AOAV for the period 1 May 2014 – 30 April 2015 shows that civilians made up 89% of all casualties (killed or physically injured) when explosive weapons were used in populated areas in Ukraine.⁵ On average, nine civilians were killed per attack with explosive weapons. When MLRS like the Grad were used, however, an average of 14 civilians were killed per attack. This shows the destructive power when rockets are fired in salvos into populated areas. By far the biggest cause of civilian casualties in Ukraine was ground-launched explosive weapons. They were responsible for 1,888 of the civilian casualties from explosive weapons that AOAV recorded in Ukraine during this period (90 per cent). Aerial weapons caused 87 civilian casualties and IEDs caused 25 casualties, with the remainder being caused either by mines or in attacks involving a combination of launch methods. Most civilian casualties from explosive weapons were caused by 'shelling' (542), rockets (356), artillery shelling (289) or multiple explosive weapons (249). Missiles killed or injured 305 civilians in five incidents, but almost all of these occurred in the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in July 2014.

DAILY LIFE IMPOSSIBLE FOR COUNTLESS UKRAINIANS

Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, some 145 health facilities have suffered damage because of shelling, which places access to health care under severe pressure. Around 164 schools

have been damaged in the Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCAs) in the Donetsk region alone. As a result of the damage to water and electricity supply networks, around 1 million people risk a lack of access to potable water, and thousands of people have no access to piped potable water for long periods of time.⁶ This increases the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks.

Explosive violence in Ukraine has not only caused damage to roads, railways, bridges and other vital infrastructure. Countless Ukrainians have lost their jobs because mines, shops, factories and other facilities were forced to close down due to explosive weapon damage. More than 100,000 people have limited access to electricity, water supply and gas in Donetsk and Luhansk alone.⁷

The ongoing stress and fear of shelling and unexploded ordnance add to the problems that Ukrainians face on a daily basis. According to UNICEF, at least 109 children were reported to have been injured and 42 killed by landmines and unexploded ordnance in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions between March 2014 and March 2015.⁸

³ Financial Times, *Full text of the Minsk Agreement*, available at: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/21b8f98e-b2a5-11e4-b234-00144feab7de.html#axzz3fN6PpydN>.

² OCHA, *Ukraine Situation Update as of 3 July 2015*, available at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/documents/document-type/situation-report>. This is a conservative estimate of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) and World Health Organization (WHO) based on available data. The HRMMU and WHO believe that the actual number of fatalities is higher.

³ OCHA, *Ukraine Overview of Population Displacement* (31 July 2015), available at: <http://reliefweb.int/map/ukraine/ukraine-overview-population-displacement-31-july-2015>.

⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Ukraine: More Civilians Killed in Cluster Munitions Attacks", March 19, 2015, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/03/19/ukraine-more-civilians-killed-cluster-munition-attacks>.

⁵ AOAV's sampling of news media in the English language does not reflect every casualty, but their database is intended to be an indicator of the scale and patterns of civilian harm. For more information, see www.aoav.org.uk.

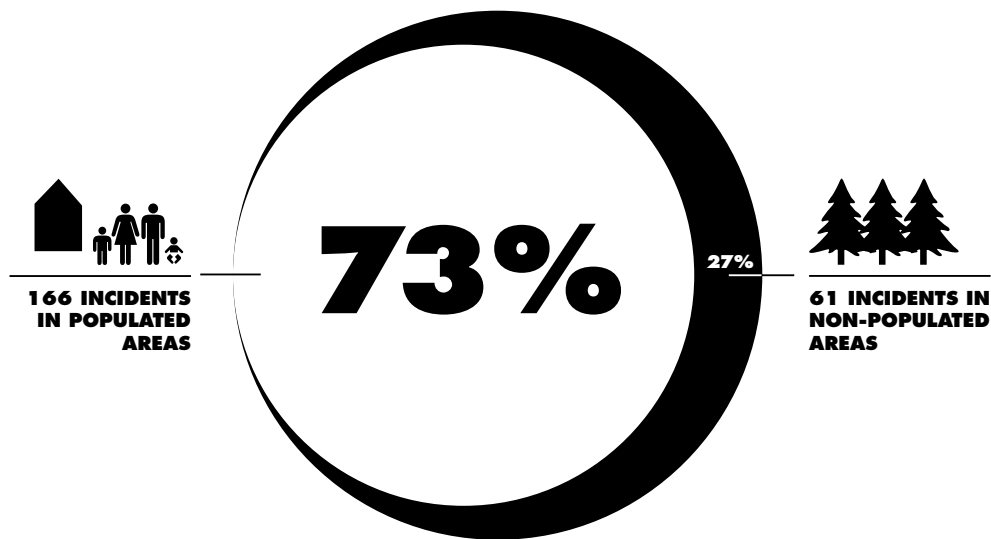
⁶ OCHA, *Ukraine Situation Update as of 3 July 2015*, available at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/documents/document-type/situation-report>. This conservative estimate, based on available data, was calculated by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The HRMMU and WHO believe that the number of actual fatalities is higher.

⁷ OCHA (June 2015), *Humanitarian Dashboard January-May 2015*, available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-dashboard-january-may-2015>.

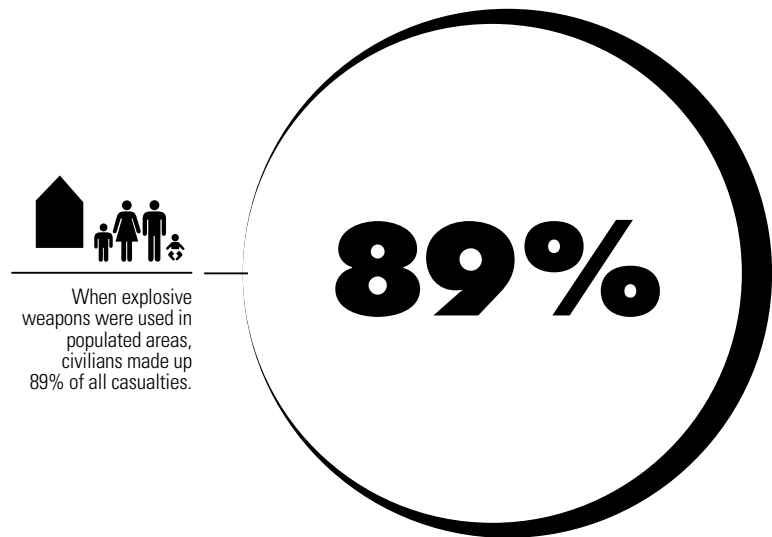
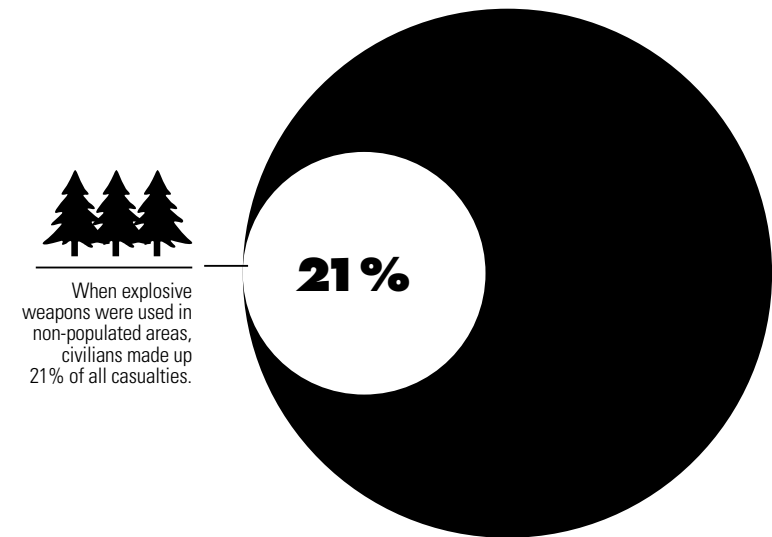
⁸ UNICEF, *Children killed and injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance in eastern Ukraine*, 31 March 2015, available at: www.unicef.org/media/media_81398.html.

USE OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN POPULATED AREAS IN UKRAINE

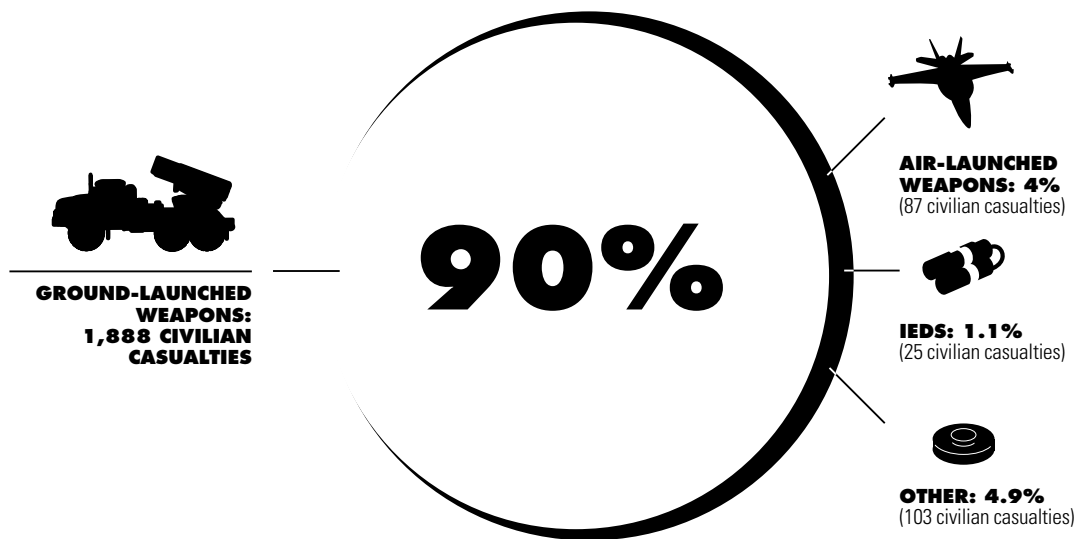
IN UKRAINE, OF ALL RECORDED 227 INCIDENTS WITH EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS, 73% TOOK PLACE IN POPULATED AREAS.



CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AS A RESULT OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN UKRAINE



TYPES OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS RESPONSIBLE FOR CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN UKRAINE



Data collection by AOA V between 1 May 2014 – 30 April 2015. For more information, see www.aov.org.uk.

THE WIDE-AREA EFFECT OF MULTIPLE LAUNCH ROCKET SYSTEMS IN UKRAINE

ON AVERAGE THERE WERE 9 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES PER ATTACK WITH EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS



WHEN MULTIPLE LAUNCH ROCKET SYSTEMS WERE USED THERE WERE 14 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES PER ATTACK



Data collection by AOA V between 1 May 2014 – 30 April 2015. For more information, see www.aov.org.uk.



A destroyed children's slide in the garden of an apartment block in Zhovtnevyi Raion, Donetsk.



Julia picks up free supplies provided by volunteers from the local NGO "SOS Kramatorsk" who help IDPs, primarily from the Donbass region, with their basic needs.



Beds packed together in a room in the IDP collective centre
"In the Church of the Holy Spirit" in Kramatorsk.



Maryna from Pisky, in the Donetsk region, has been in the IDP collective centre "In the Church of the Holy Spirit" in Kramatorsk for the past six months.



A bomb shelter in the garden of the Bystryskiy family in the village of Semenivka , near Sloviansk.



Mykyta walks down the staircase of his shelled apartment block near the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



Irina collects firewood from the rubble of a damaged school, caused by shelling in August 2014 in Donetsk.



Sandbags and trenches are still visible in the city centre of Kramatorsk, as a reminder of the fighting one year ago.



Lyubov picks roses in her heavily shelled garden in the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



Ivan from Vodian, in the Donetsk region, has been in the IDP collective centre "In the Church of the Holy Spirit" in Kramatorsk for the past six months.



After the Shnurenko family lost two cats and their aquarium with small fish in the shelling that destroyed their home in Sloviansk, they bought bird Stepan as a distraction for their two boys.



Aza collects her belongings from her heavily shelled apartment block in Zhovtnevyi Raion, Donetsk.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----



Roses in Tatyana's room in the former sanatorium of Sviatohirsk, which now functions as a collective centre for IDPs from the Donbass region.



I own a small store in the open market-
place. We were outside and we heard
the sound of a plane approaching.
The plane flew by and then it seemed
to turn around. Within three or four
minutes something hit the ground
about 300 metres away from us.

I can't even talk about it now, the
feeling was so strong and so horrible.

I left my market store and ran to the
kindergarten where my child was.
People were telling me to close the
store but I didn't care. I just ran to
the kindergarten. Early the next
morning we fled.

YULIYA (39) // OWNS A MARKET STORE



Private apartment at Bulvarna St in Sloviansk.



I was frying potatoes. I was used to the sound of shelling so I didn't really pay attention, I was focused on frying potatoes. I took a spoonful of potatoes and tasted it. They were hot and tasty.

Then the first explosion took place, about five metres away from my house, though I only understood this later on.

Instantly the glass was shattered. I almost bit off my spoon.

ALEKSANDR (38) // MINE WORKER



Private house in the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I was sheltering here in the basement with other IDPs during the shelling.

I was terrified because my own children and husband were at home while I was stuck here.

I was supposed to be keeping everyone calm but I was the one crying the most.

NATASHA (30) // VOLUNTEER, IDP COLLECTIVE CENTRE



Private apartment outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I worked at a plant that produced soft drinks. In April we went to work, but then the shelling started and we were told to go home.

I lost my job at the factory because it was hit during an explosive weapon attack. That was last June. It was somewhere around the same time when our house burnt down, which was on 7 June. I worked there for thirteen and a half years.

All 90 employees were left without work, salary and communication with management. It's hard to find employment here now.

ALEKSANDR (37) // FACTORY WORKER



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



We were in the house when the first shelling took place. We were hiding in the bathroom for one and a half hours.

When we went outside we could see how people were recovering bodies. There were people with wounds, for example in the stomach. The gas station across the road exploded, it was very scary. The road here that goes across the railroad was all covered in blood.

We couldn't ever have imagined that something like this could happen to our house and that the damage would be so bad.

ANASTASIYA (25) // MOTHER OF ONE



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I can't even start explaining how it was. It was a terrible sound, the walls were shaking, the glass was flying. People yelled 'Aunt Luda' – this is what they call me – 'Help!'.

When I opened my eyes it was like there was flour everywhere in the air, it was white, I couldn't see anything. It was like very thick fog. And the smell of things being burned. And then another one, and another one, then quiet.

The war has not just destroyed these apartments, it has destroyed our lives.

LYUDMILA (58) // RETIRED TEACHER



Private house in the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I'm not a man of many words. I worked in a mine for 25 years.

We were outside, standing in the line for bread. My wife was behind me. It happened so fast and unexpectedly. I just heard two things passing by, like a whistle.

I knew her voice so well, we were married for 29 years. Her name was Milatovana. God bless her soul. We thought we would celebrate our 30th anniversary this year but now we never will.

GENNADIY (55) // RETIRED MINE WORKER



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I am all alone here. But if I leave it will all be looted.

Shelling is going on all the time. The gas pipes are damaged. There is no gas or electricity. I have a small well for water.

My wife passed away three years ago. I cannot visit the grave because of the shelling.

ANATOLIY (75) // PENSIONER



Private apartment at Bulvarna St in Sloviansk.



We came to pick up our things. It's impossible to live here, the shelling is almost every day.

There's no water, no gas, nothing – no conditions for life. All the pipe systems are damaged. The apartment is on the contact line so it's right in the middle.

We were told, 'Please take all you can because this place will not exist.' I am seven months pregnant.

NATALIA (31) // TRANSPORT SPECIALIST, PRIVATE COMPANY



Private apartment at Bulvarna St in Sloviansk.



The most traumatic event was when everything caught fire and I realised that I had nothing left. I just hysterically cried, no one could stop me.

My son was so scared. He's extremely afraid of planes and helicopters if he sees them because of the bombings.

I don't understand why this all happened. We are just common people.

ELENA (32) // COSMETICS SALESWOMAN



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I was on the balcony of my apartment when it happened. I ran inside. I heard the explosions - six or seven - Then after five minutes, when it was calm, I came back to the balcony to see what had happened.

The attack hit the school, shop and two garages. The attack was in August 2014.

They're promising to re-open the school on 1 September 2015.

VLADISLAV (40) // CONSTRUCTION WORKER



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



Let me just explain the situation we were in: we came to the point when there were dead bodies on the street and people would just pass by. That's the point we had reached.

This one blast was so powerful that all the windows in our house opened at once. They weren't locked but they were closed. The wind was so powerful, even though the explosion hit next door. It was more than 10 metres away from us and it hit next to my neighbour's house, right under his windows.

People said that his head was torn off by parts of the house flying around. He was buried in the garden.

ANDREY (38) // MINE WORKER



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I was standing right next to my brother when he was knocked off his feet.

I saw a lot of dust, like a really powerful wind. My ears were ringing. I fell down.

Then I ran really fast towards the basement outside.

VLADIMIR (16) // HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT / ANDREY'S SON



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



My daughter's friend Andrina went to the same dancing school.

Her mum came to pick her up from school on a bike. She put her on the bike behind her.

The shelling started and the shrapnel hit the girl's backpack. It went through and killed the girl.

ELLINA // ON MATERNITY LEAVE



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



If the shelling starts here we run to the basement to shelter. Everywhere you run there's fragmentation.

Today they started to shell again at twelve o'clock.

My son died three years ago. There's a graveyard where he's buried, but it's completely destroyed. There are explosive remnants lying around, so I can't even visit his grave.

NADEJDA (56) // OWNS A MARKET STORE



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



I am a nurse working at the lab in the psychiatric hospital. I run blood tests and these kinds of things.

The hospital was destroyed and it was relocated to a different area. The patients were evacuated before the shelling. The old hospital buildings here were built specifically as a hospital – they have special rooms and facilities. In the other location it is not so good.

Maybe when people start thinking with their heads again, all of this will stop.

LYUBOV (65) // LABORATORY WORKER IN A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL



Regional psychiatric hospital outside the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



The mines are damaged so there's not enough coal. To buy it you need lots of money. That's why I'm collecting firewood for winter.

During the last winter I would go to the forest and cut the trees with a saw.

My mother did the same. She is in her seventies.

IRINA (55) // PENSIONER



The tail of a 120mm mortar in a garden in the village of Semenivka, near Sloviansk.



Remnant of the rocket motor from a Grad rocket on Stratonavtiv St in Donetsk.



Remnant of a Grad rocket on the bridge between Kyivs'kyi Av and Zlitna St in Donetsk.



Remnant of the engine of a Uragan rocket in Zhovtnevyi Raton, Donetsk.



Fragmentation, most likely of a mortar shell, on the bridge between Kyivs'kyi Av and Zlitna St in Donetsk.



The tail of a 120mm mortar on Stratonavtiv St in Donetsk.

About OCHA and PAX

ABOUT OCHA

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, is responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA also ensures that there is a framework within which each actor can contribute to the overall response effort. OCHA's core functions are coordination, policy, advocacy, information management and humanitarian financing.

Our mission is to:

- mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies
- advocate the rights of people in need
- promote emergency preparedness and prevention
- facilitate sustainable solutions

OCHA has a unique mandate to speak out on behalf of the people worst affected by humanitarian situations. Our ultimate goal is to save more lives and reduce the impact of conflicts and natural disasters.

www.unocha.org

ABOUT PAX

PAX means peace. Together with people in conflict areas and concerned citizens, PAX works to build just and peaceful societies all over the world. PAX brings together people who have the courage to stand for peace. Everyone who believes in peace can contribute. We believe that all these steps, whether small or large, truly matter and will contribute to a just and peaceful world. Our peace building work in conflict areas is based on values of human dignity and solidarity with peace activists and victims of war violence. In our peace work, the protection and security of civilians guides our responses to conflicts.

PAX works in countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and South-Eastern Europe.

www.paxforpeace.nl



September 2015

ISBN

978-90-70443-88-7

Visual concept and photography:

Dirk-Jan Visser

Concept, interviews, text and edit:

Roos Boer (PAX)

Research, text and edit:

Hannah Tonkin (OCHA)

Editing:

Susan Clark Translations

Graphic design:

-SYB-

Production:

Jos Morree FINE BOOKS

Printing:

drukkerij Mart.Spruijt

We would like to express our gratitude to all our interviewees: Yuliya, Aleksandr, Tatyana, Natasha, Vera, Lyudmila, Anastasiya, Elena, Sasha (Aleksandr), Anatoliy, Lyubov, Ellina, Gennadiy, Tatyana, Andrey, Vladimir, Nadejda, Natalia, Boris, Anatoliy, Victor, Vladislav, Svetlana and Irina. We thank them for sharing their stories.

We also thank the following persons for their invaluable input and support: Pieter-Jan Baas (PAX), Simon Bagshaw (OCHA), Natalya Borysenko (R2P), Ivane Bochorshvili (OCHA), Lars Bromley (UNITAR), Kimberly Brown (Save the Children UK), Anastasyia Buha (OCHA), Stanislav Chernogor (R2P), Vladimir Chizkov (OCHA), Cinta Depondt (PAX), Mark Hiznay (HRW), Barbara Manzi (OCHA), Nadir Minbashiyev (OCHA), Tibor Nemes (OSCE), Vanno Noupech (UNHCR), Marina Oleinik (City of Sloviansk), Oleksandr Osinskyy (OCHA), Rob Perkins (AOAV), Lucy Pinches (NPA), Gulsora Pulatova (OCHA), Frank Slijper (PAX), Mikhail Slivka (Donetsk Regional Administration), Irina Stepanova (R2P), Natasha Stojkowska (UNICEF), Miriam Struyk (PAX) and Aleksandr Voroshkov (SOS Kramatorsk).

If you have questions or comments about this publication, please send them to info@paxforpeace.nl.

Copyright satellite images pages 0/1 and 6/7: Copyright CNES 2015, Distribution Airbus Defense and Space. Produced by United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT); <http://unitar.org/unosat>.

Copyright satellite images pages 2/3 and 8/9: DigitalGlobe 2015. Produced by United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT); <http://unitar.org/unosat>.


Disclaimer

This publication was developed by OCHA Policy Development and Studies Branch (PDSB) and PAX. It does not necessarily represent the official views of the United Nations.



OCHA

PAX



Every day, in a range of different contexts around the world, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas causes immense harm to civilians. Their use in towns and cities in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, the occupied Palestinian territory, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, amongst others, has resulted in countless civilian casualties, widespread displacement and the destruction of vital infrastructure upon which civilians depend. Too often, civilian casualties and the destruction of civilian homes and livelihoods are accepted as “collateral damage” – a sad but inevitable side effect of war. We must challenge this narrative: the humanitarian impact of the use of bombs, rockets, mortars and other explosive weapons in towns and cities is predictable and can often be avoided.