

MONITORING MISSION REPORT

Winterization: Solid Fuel Assistance

The East Hub team of the Shelter Cluster carried out monitoring missions in Dnipropetrovska Oblast in collaboration with TGH, Posmishka, and Solidarités International. These missions aimed to fulfill the cluster's core functions of monitoring and evaluation, with a particular focus on assessing the solid fuel needs of affected households. The Shelter Cluster team extends its gratitude to the participating organizations for their involvement in the monitoring mission.

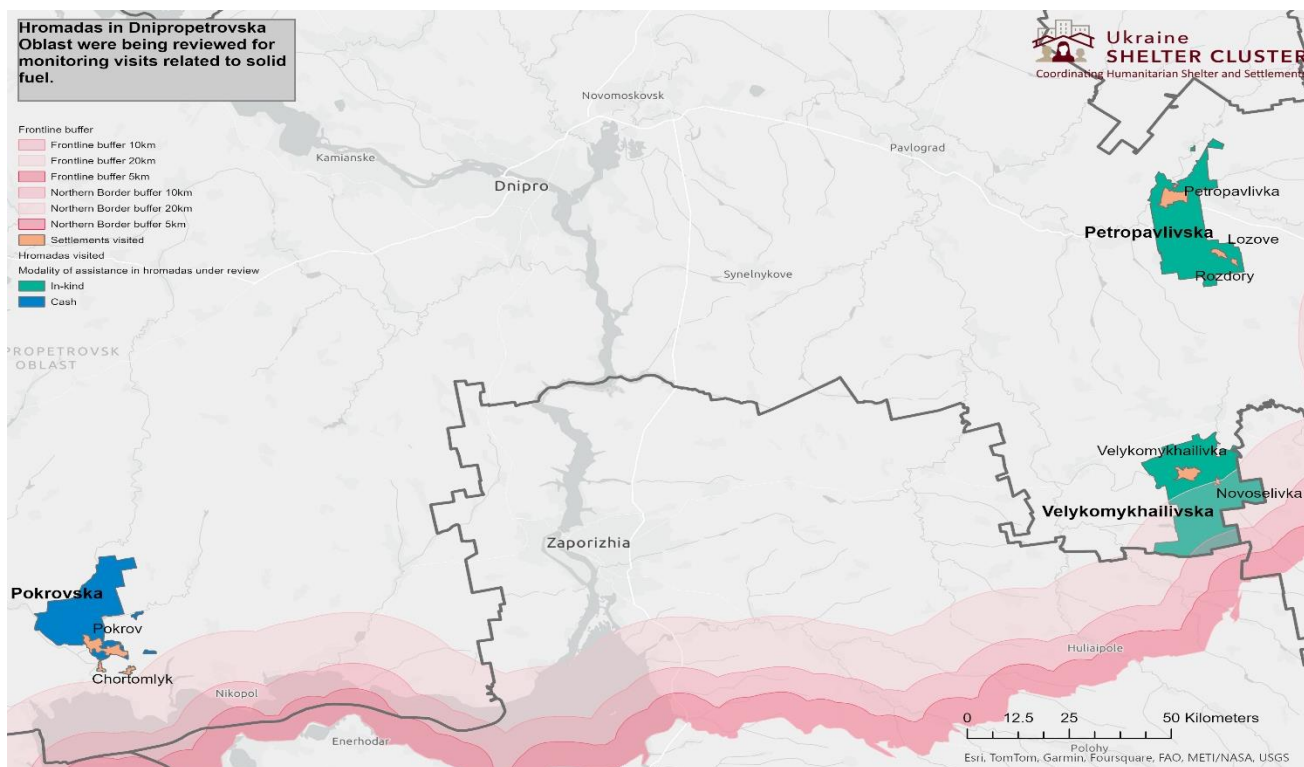


Figure 1. Hromadas in Dnipropetrovska oblast that were being reviewed.

	Mission details		
Date of visit:	January 14, 2025	January 22, 2025	January 23, 2025
Locations:	Petropavlivska hromada, Synelnykivskyi raion	Pokrovska hromada, Nikopolskyi raion	Velykomykhailivska hromada, Synelnykivskyi raion
Participants:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Petropavlivska Hromada; Deputy Head of Petropavlivska Hromada; SNFI Cluster team. TGH team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Pokrovska Hromada; SNFI Cluster team Posmishka team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Velykomykhailivska hromada Deputy of Velykomykhailivska hromada SNFI Cluster team SI team.

During the monitoring visit, 17 households that received in-kind (briquettes) and cash assistance for heating in the winter period 2024-2025 were visited. 12 of the households received in-kind assistance, and 5 households received cash assistance.

Meetings were also organized with local administrations to establish joint coordination of humanitarian assistance, in particular as part of ongoing winterization activities and identification of other urgent needs.

Context:

Petropavlivska Hromada has a current population of 12,000 people. Since 2022, approximately 2,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have settled in the area, including individuals from vulnerable groups. The hromada does not expect a significant increase in the number of IDPs in the near future.

The primary sources of heating in the community are gas and coal. Most residents come from mining families and receive free coal for winter heating as assistance from local enterprises. Additionally, the Hromada has a program allocated from the local budget for families with low-income to help them get through the winter. The assistance is 2,000-3,000 UAH. The Department of Social Protection plays an active role in assisting vulnerable groups by collecting and sharing data with aid organizations. As a result, residents regularly receive food kits from the organization Nasha Sprava and non-food item (NFI) kits from GIZ. Additionally, TGH has provided winter clothing assistance to the most vulnerable populations.

IDPs in the hromada can apply for state subsidies, and no cases of denial have been reported.

Local representatives note that most of the community's winter needs are being met. This suggests that the data submitted by the Dnipropetrovsk OVA to the cluster coordination table should be updated to reflect the current needs of the population more accurately.

The last instance of shelling, which caused damage to buildings and homes, occurred in 2022. Since then, local authorities, with support from NGOs, have assisted in repairing the affected properties. At present, there are no urgent needs in the hromada.

Pokrovaska Hromada has a current population of 42,000 people, with one-third classified as vulnerable. Since 2022, approximately 13,000 IDPs have arrived in the community. However, during the winterization process, more than 5 thousand of IDPs left due to Resolution 993, as they registered for cash assistance in their previous place of residence.

The primary source of heating in the hromada is gas. Due to a decline in local budget revenues, no local support programs are planned for the winter period. However, residents can apply for state subsidies.



Figure 2. Monitoring mission with TGH's beneficiaries.

Since the start of winter, the Hromada has received over 260 applications for solid fuel assistance in kind. However, as in other visited locations, there has been no data exchange with the OVA to update the information in the Shelter Cluster coordination table.

Humanitarian aid is available in the hromada, including food, hygiene kits, psychological support, and humanitarian repairs. The head of the community noted that the social department is actively working with organizations that provide support to the community.

In the event of shelling, there is a stock of materials to respond to damages and restore thermal envelope independently. Additionally, assistance can be obtained from Proliska and Caritas. Residents also have the option to apply for the e-recovery program.

Local representatives highlight the need for improvements in the Collective Center, where 200 IDPs currently live. The center requires repairs to the water supply system, replacement of the power grid, and the provision of white appliances such as washing machines, dryers, refrigerators, and microwaves. While organizations have offered these IDPs “cash for rent” assistance, people plan to continue living in the collective center, because they say that they will not be able to afford housing once the cash for rent assistance ends.

Velykomykhailivska Hromada has a current population of 2,100 people. Since 2022, approximately 400 IDPs have also settled in the area. According to the head of the hromada, 80% of the population belongs to various vulnerable groups.



Figure 4. SI's distribution process.

local budget. However, people can apply for subsidies to help cover utility costs.

The Hromada relies on two types of heating: gas and solid fuel. Among solid fuel options, firewood is considered the most suitable by the residents. The head of the hromada emphasized that



Figure 3. House of the beneficiary of cash assistance for the purchase of solid fuel in Pokrovska hromada.

The need for solid fuel is partially covered by Solidarités International, which supports 167 households, as well as a cash assistance program from UNHCR under Resolution 993. However, only one household has received support through this resolution so far. Hromada representatives expect an increase in the number of people eligible to receive UAH 21,000 for purchasing solid fuel. In total, 797 households have been registered under Resolution 993.

Currently, there are no local programs to support the population in preparation for winter, meaning that residents do not receive assistance from the

distributing aid in-kind, rather than as cash, has been the most effective approach. However, community representatives had difficulty identifying additional winter-related needs, stating that most other necessities could be covered independently if financial support were available.

Regarding the overall situation, the settlements closest to the frontline are in urgent need of construction materials and repairs. The Hromada actively works with Proliska when shelling occurs in areas accessible for ESK distribution. Additionally, the hromada has a limited stock of slate for residents to use for repairs.

Concerning the e-recovery program, it was noted that applications are submitted individually by residents, meaning local authorities have limited information about participation. The primary challenge in accessing this program is the lack of housing ownership documents.

Residents regularly receive food kits from the WFP or financial assistance to purchase food. However, there is still an unmet need for hygiene kits.

Provision of solid fuel:

More than half of all beneficiaries received in-kind and cash assistance (10 HHs out of 17) do not have gas supply as an alternative type of heating or were cut off from it. The 7 remaining households were not meeting the criteria of solid fuel assistance as already have and use gas heating



Figure 5. In-kind assistance.

in their homes. 4 of these households received cash for solid fuel, and 3 households received in-kind briquettes. The assistance from organizations was provided between mid-November and mid-January, during the heating season. According to distribution lists, the amount of briquettes and cash provided followed Shelter Cluster recommendations—3.4 tons per household or 21 thousand UAH. The briquettes were delivered in bags, and although all distributions in a given area came from the same supplier, there were discrepancies in the number of bags received by beneficiaries, as well as the types of briquettes provided. Solid fuel was distributed to the door, but in most cases, households

were not informed in advance about the day and

time of delivery.

8 out of 12 households receiving briquettes reported that they use their own additional type of solid fuel (3 HHs use coal, 5 HHs use firewood), and only in this case the provided assistance can be considered as enough. Also, beneficiaries rarely (3 HHs out of 17) reported using solid fuel for cooking. Instead, they use other types of fuel with higher heat output or gas, gas cylinder or electric stoves. Almost all households stored the briquettes properly, ensuring protection from moisture. However, 4 out of 12 HHs reported that the briquettes were of poor quality with low heat transfer, though this concern was mainly related to one specific type of briquette distributed. Additionally, households needed



Figure 6. Example of briquettes purchased after receiving cash for solid fuel.

firewood to ignite the briquettes, but beneficiaries struggled to estimate the exact amount required. The selection and registration of beneficiaries were primarily conducted through the hromada administration, with no additional assessments by aid organizations. Notably, 5 out of 12 households received briquettes, obtained also clear instructions on briquette usage, details about the assistance provided, and a hotline number for feedback. After registration and selection, beneficiaries were notified via SMS about their approval, along with the organization's hotline. However, those who were not selected did not receive any notification about their application status.

Organizations did not offer beneficiaries a choice of solid fuel type, nor did they inform them in advance about the quantity, delivery timeframe, or selection criteria. Additionally, 5 families attempted to register for further humanitarian assistance from UNHCR under Resolution 993. Beneficiaries receiving cash assistance for purchasing solid fuel were notified about the registration process through the community's Telegram channel. The registration was conducted directly by the organization, and funds were transferred approximately one month after data collection, meaning the payments were made in December. Cash recipients noted that the nearest ATM is located 6 km from their place of residence.

All households reported purchasing solid fuel as needed. This approach allows them to seek better prices, facilitates easier storage, and provides the opportunity to test different types of solid fuel before making further purchases based on their household's needs.



Figure 7. Example of firewood purchased after receiving cash for solid fuel.

3 out of 5 surveyed households who received cash purchased firewood without receiving any official documents from the supplier. Residents acknowledged that this involved illegal deforestation but opted for this method due to the significant cost difference. Recipients also noted that the allocated amount of UAH 21,000 was insufficient to cover solid fuel expenses for the entire winter season. But at the same time, they indicated that they spend this money not only on fuel, but also on paying utility bills and purchasing personal items for household members.

While respondents had a general understanding of why they were selected for assistance, they did not know how to contact the organization that provided the aid.

To improve the effectiveness and accountability of shelter programs, Shelter Cluster partners should conduct thorough needs assessments and engage in clear communication with affected households before distributing aid. This will help both to improve accountability to affected populations and to identify the population that does not have gas supply for heating. Accountability is crucial in shelter programs¹, as it ensures that beneficiaries are consulted in program design, understand their selection criteria, and have access to agencies' hotlines for additional support. Shelter Cluster partners are encouraged to follow the Winterization Guidelines² and conduct their

¹ [Shelter Cluster Activities Handbook](#)

² [Shelter Cluster Winterization Guidelines](#)

own assessments³ to effectively apply vulnerability and protection approaches in beneficiary targeting.

Recommendations:

Recommendation	To Whom
Shelter Cluster partners are reminded to ensure that they conduct needs assessments in line with Shelter Cluster Winterization Recommendations and the Activity Handbook	Partners
Shelter Cluster partners are recommended to avoid different types of solid fuel for one household, as well as to control the quality of purchased fuel.	Partners
Shelter Cluster partners to ensure consultation with beneficiaries pre and post distribution to understand their most urgent needs and to understand their preferences in terms of modality of assistance etc.	Partners
Shelter Cluster partners to ensure that the assistance provider or implementing organization notifies beneficiaries of the day and time of delivery in advance	Partners
Partners to ensure that when procuring briquettes that they are doing the quality assessment as mentioned in the Winterization Guidelines and adhering to local DSTU standards	Partners
Organizations providing cash assistance to enhance sensitization to beneficiaries concerning the legality of firewood procurement	Partners
Shelter Cluster to consider creation of standardized ICE communication materials for Winter 2025-26 for enhanced communication with beneficiaries on timelines, purpose of cash, legality of firewood, and fire and carbon monoxide prevention when burning of solid fuel	Shelter Cluster and Winterization TWIG 2025-26
Organizations should clearly communicate to both beneficiaries and local authorities that cash assistance for solid fuel is intended exclusively for purchasing solid fuel. Households with a stable gas supply for heating may be considered for alternative programs, such as "Cash for Utilities."	Partners, Shelter Cluster East Hub together with Oblast, Hromada Authorities
Hromadas` representatives should ensure that they update information on the population's winterization needs through communication with the Oblast administration or directly with the Shelter Cluster.	Hromadas, Oblast Administration
The Shelter Cluster should focus on capacity building at both the oblast and hromada levels, ensuring local authorities have a unified understanding of vulnerability and eligibility criteria to standardize the methodology used.	Shelter Cluster East Hub Team
Shelter Cluster TWIG on Winterization to consider creating standardized needs assessment template for solid fuel to facilitate partners' conducting of a needs assessment for the next winter	Shelter Cluster TWIG on Winterization

³ [MailChimp](#)



**UKRAINE
SHELTER CLUSTER**

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

Shelter Cluster partners to ensure post distribution monitoring of their solid fuel interventions through the [Shelter Cluster's standardized post distribution monitoring](#) form and to share findings with local authorities to enhance understanding about effectiveness of cash and in-kind forms of assistance

Partners, Shelter Cluster East Hub together with Oblast Authorities