



EU4Recovery – Empowering Communities in Ukraine

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Annual Progress Report

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	Administrative Service Centre	NHSU	National Health Service of Ukraine
CRC	Community Resilience Centre	NPU	National Police of Ukraine
CRSV	Conflict-related sexual violence	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CSO	Civil society organization	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
CSSCWG	Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Group	OPG	Office of the Prosecutor General
DG East	Democratic Governance East	RDNA3	Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment
EDMS	Electronic document management system	SCORE	Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index
EU	European Union	SeeD	Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development
FLAS	Free Legal Aid System	SES	State Emergency Service
GBV	Gender-based violence	SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
GDP	Gross domestic product	SSGB	Student self-government bodies
GISMAERC	Geoinformation System for Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Resolution of Conflicts	UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
IDP	Internally displaced person	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
ISL	Individual supported living	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
MHPSS	Mental health and psychosocial support	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs	VAWG	Violence against women and girls
MPC	Mobile palliative care	WHO	World Health Organization
MSP	Ministry of Social Policy		
MVA	Ministry of Veterans Affairs		
NGO	Non-governmental organization		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the 24 February 2022 invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the war – now in its third year – has already led to significant loss of life, unprecedented displacement (internally and to neighbouring countries), and devastating destruction of Ukraine's infrastructure. Approximately 21 million people have been directly affected by the war, with nearly 14.6 million requiring humanitarian assistance,¹ 3.5 million individuals remain forcibly displaced within the country, and 6.5 million refugees from Ukraine are recorded globally.² The third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA3), conducted by the Government of Ukraine, the European Union (EU), the United Nations and the World Bank, found that direct damage in Ukraine has reached almost US\$152 billion. As of 31 December 2023, reconstruction and recovery will cost an estimated \$486 billion over the next decade. The war has triggered a profound economic and social crisis: poverty surged from 5.5 percent in 2021 to 24 percent in 2022, forcing 7.1 million more people into poverty and undoing 15 years of progress.³ The war has amplified structural weaknesses in the economy: in real terms, gross domestic product (GDP) in 2023 is 74 percent of 2021 GDP. The total damage to the commerce and industry sector to December 2023, is estimated at \$15.6 billion, an increase of 43 percent from 2022. Job losses are mounting, with employment dropping to 15.5 percentage points (2.4 million jobs) below pre-war levels.⁴

In the years leading up to the current crisis, nuclear power generated half of Ukraine's electricity, with coal and gas providing smaller shares. By May 2024, around 70 percent of the country's thermal generation capacity was damaged or occupied, and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, once responsible for a quarter of Ukraine's electricity, remained under Russian control. Significant damage to high-voltage and distribution substations has led to ongoing power disruptions. The energy sector has suffered the most damage since the invasion, with losses es-

timated at \$11.4 billion, primarily in generation facilities. Rebuilding efforts are expected to cost around \$30 billion.⁵

The security situation and the overall operational environment have continued to deteriorate and – with no end to hostilities currently in sight – there is a strong need to help Ukraine's communities and economic remain resilient.

In this regard, the flagship EU4Recovery — Empowering Communities in Ukraine initiative, a partnership between the European Union (EU) and UNDP, is supporting the resilience and early recovery of war-affected communities by increasing access to and the quality of public services (Objective 1), and enhancing community security and strengthening the social fabric (Objective 2).

Overall, six health care facilities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Poltava and Sumy oblasts benefited from new mobile health clinics and six health care facilities received specialized vehicles for mobile palliative care (MPC). Moreover, 19 mobile social service units, provided by the Project, are now fully operational in selected communities in the target oblasts. Eight primary health care facilities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts have received specialized vehicles to enable family doctors to render medical services to elderly and disabled community members more efficiently. Notably, more than 130,000 war-affected individuals have already benefitted from improved social care services during the reporting period. As part of efforts to enhance public services for war-affected populations, the Administrative Service Centre (ASC) in Solonytsivka, Kharkiv Oblast, was successfully renovated. With the 10 new fully equipped workstations, the ASC now delivers essential administrative, legal, and psychosocial services to approximately 35,000 residents and 16,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs).

1 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Situation Overview, at <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/>, accessed 7 October 2024.

2 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (June 2024) Europe situations: Data and trends - Arrivals and displaced populations (June 2024), at <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/unhcr-europe-situations-data-and-trends-arrivals-and-displaced-populations-june-2024>.

3 Economics Observatory, Ukraine: what's the global economic impact of Russia's invasion? October 2023, at <https://www.economicsobservatory.com/ukraine-whats-the-global-economic-impact-of-russias-invasion>.

4 World Bank (February 2024) Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment Released, at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/02/15/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment-released>.

5 International Energy Agency (2024), Ukraine's energy system under attack, at <https://www.iea.org/reports/ukraines-energy-security-and-the-coming-winter/ukraines-energy-system-under-attack>.

Further to this, 12 communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, with a total population of 1.23 million, are now covered by a network of mobile service centres, bringing essential public services closer to citizens, especially vulnerable groups. In total, at least 34,000 people (including 19,500 women, 20,000 older people and 4,000 persons with disabilities) have already accessed much-needed administrative services through the mobile service centres and mobile ASC suitcases⁶, provided by the Project.

During the reporting period, 12 State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES) units in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts benefitted from material support (trailers, mobile washing points, equipment for training classrooms, rescue and firefighting equipment, and specialized vehicles) and capacity strengthening on burn-out prevention, psychological recovery, and management and communication skills. With the new equipment and skills, first responders can more effectively manage and respond to emergencies.

The Project has also supported the opening of three new police stations in border communities in Chernihiv Oblast.⁷ With the fully equipped facilities, police officers can now respond more effectively to security issues in their communities.

Sixty-three dialogue platforms are operational to support inclusive and participatory recovery in Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk, Poltava, Zakarpattia and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. These are Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Groups (CSSCWGs), Community Security and Recovery Working Groups (CSRWGs), and Internally Displaced Person Councils. Some 1,500 people (67 percent women) – from local authorities, police, the SES and civil society – are actively participating in these platforms. During the reporting period, over 100 community-based initiatives, developed by members of these dialogue platforms, received funding for their implementation.

Three Community Resilience Centres are operational in Kamianske (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Kremenchuk (Poltava Oblast) and Nizhyn (Chernihiv Oblast). These centres are flexible hubs offering a variety of services to address the specific needs of local communities, focusing on youth, families, women, and vulnerable

groups. Throughout the reporting year, the Community Resilience Centres reached 4,872 community members, including 3,044 women, 3,891 young people, 554 IDPs and 324 people with disabilities.

The project also supported at least 73,600 war-affected people (59 percent women) to benefit from quality legal aid. This was enabled by providing essential technical and capacity-building support to free legal aid service actors.

In total, over 1,500 women and girls, including gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, received essential legal and psychosocial assistance. Additionally, 10 service points were mapped,⁸ with Project support, to enhance access to GBV services and justice for women and girls.

The Project contributed to improving community-based structures, capacity systems, and safety nets for preventing and responding to GBV and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in the target oblasts. As a result of these activities, awareness, and knowledge of GBV prevention and response have significantly increased among 2,815,321 individuals (1,953,875 women). This progress was achieved through a range of innovative initiatives, which included awareness-raising sessions on critical topics, the creation of support groups, and social media information campaigns.

The “I’m a Veteran” platform was upgraded for ASCs in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. The enhanced platform expanded the list of services for veterans and their families from about 100 to 300, ensuring access to these services in one place without long waits. Already 20,000 veterans in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast have used the “I’m a Veteran” system across the oblast’s ASCs.

As a part of comprehensive work for the community-based reintegration of veterans, the Project has also supported the establishment of 11 veteran hubs throughout 2024, providing spaces for veterans to connect, access resources, and receive support.

A total of 145 grant projects and 39 quick-impact projects were supported, focusing on community security, social cohesion, social entrepreneurship, community policing, access to justice and providing support to veterans and their families, benefitting more than 144,000 people.

⁶ 30 suitcases to provide the “Mobile Administrator” service were delivered by the Project in August 2023.

⁷ New police stations have been established in three border communities in Chernihiv Oblast: the villages of Horobychi, Zamglai, and Pakul.

⁸ Lubny, Myrhorod, Dykanka, Poltava and Kremenchuk in Poltava Oblast; and Dnipro, Pidhorodne, Obukhivka, Kryvyi Rih and Synelnykove in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

More than 30 months into Russia's full-scale invasion, the war continues to inflict far-reaching humanitarian and economic consequences that will resonate for generations. Civilian casualties are staggering, infrastructure is devastated, and the economy is severely disrupted, creating a multifaceted challenge that necessitates sustained attention and support.

According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), over 11,900 civilians have been killed and more than 25,900 injured since the full-scale invasion began on 24 February 2022. Notably, September 2024 was particularly devastating, with at least 208 civilians killed and 1,220 injured, making it the month with the highest number of civilian losses (killed and injured) in 2024, continuing a trend of higher civilian casualties that began in July.⁹

The war has forcibly displaced 10 million people, leading to a significant refugee crisis.¹⁰ More than 6.5 million Ukrainians have sought refuge abroad, while 3.5 million people remain internally displaced, primarily in Dnipropetrovsk (14 percent), Kharkiv (12 percent), Kyiv (8 percent) and Zaporizhzhia (7 percent) oblasts, and the city of Kyiv (10 percent).¹¹ Most displaced people have fled war-affected Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.¹²

The economic repercussions of the war are equally alarming, with direct damage from Russian attacks reaching almost \$152 billion. Key sectors, including housing (almost \$56 billion, or 37 percent of total damage), transport (almost \$34 billion, or 22 percent), commerce and industry (almost \$16 billion, or 10 percent), energy (almost \$11 billion, or 7 percent), and

agriculture (\$10 billion, or 7 percent) have suffered significant effects. Current assessments indicate that 10 percent of Ukraine's total housing stock has been damaged or destroyed.

Additionally, damage has increased in several other sectors, including the environment, natural resources, and forestry, irrigation and water resource management, water supply and sanitation, municipal services, emergency response and civil protection, commerce and industry, and culture and tourism. Most damage is concentrated in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Kyiv and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

Cumulatively, economic losses have exceeded \$499 billion, and recovery and reconstruction needs are estimated at almost \$486 billion.¹³ These considerable needs have arisen from a war that has affected a large geographical area for an extended period.

In addition, World Bank projections suggest that Ukraine's economic recovery is expected to slow to 3.2 percent in 2024, down from 4.8 percent in 2023. This decline is primarily due to a reduced harvest and persistent labour shortages. The country's economic outlook is precarious and heavily reliant on sustained international donor support, underscoring the need for international assistance.¹⁴

The economic challenges further exacerbate the humanitarian crisis, with over 14.6 million people – 40 percent of Ukraine's population – now in need of humanitarian assistance, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).¹⁵

9 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (September 2024), Protection of civilians in armed conflict, OHCHR, September 2024, at <https://ukraine.ohchr.org/en/Protection-of-Civilians-in-Armed-Conflict-September-2024>.

10 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (September 2024) Ms. Joyce Msuya, Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator - Briefing to the Security Council on Ukraine, 10 September 2024, at <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ms-joyce-msuya-acting-under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-briefing-security-council-ukraine-10-september-2024>.

11 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (June 2024) UNHCR Europe situations: Data and trends - Arrivals and displaced populations (June 2024), at <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/unhcr-europe-situations-data-and-trends-arrivals-and-displaced-populations-june-2024>.

12 International Organization for Migration (April 2024) Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 16 (April 2024), at <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-internal-displacement-report-general-population-survey-round-16-april-2024>.

13 World Bank (February 2024) Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment Released, at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/02/15/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment-released>.

14 World Bank (April 2024) Sluggish growth delaying economic recovery in emerging Europe and Central Asia, at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/04/11/sluggish-growth-delaying-economic-recovery-in-emerging-europe-and-central-asia>.

15 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (September 2024) Ms. Joyce Msuya, Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator - Briefing to the Security Council on Ukraine, 10 September 2024, at <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ms-joyce-msuya-acting-under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-briefing-security-council-ukraine-10-september-2024>.

The Russian Federation's constant use of long-range missiles and loitering munitions means that virtually no areas of the country are safe from the hostilities. The impact of these attacks has been profound, causing extensive damage to critical infrastructure and severely affecting access to health care, social protection, education, power and other essential services.

The effects of the war are acutely felt by vulnerable groups, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, IDPs, children, veterans, and some categories of women.

Access to quality education has been compromised due to the destruction of educational facilities and a lack of resources. At least 280 education facilities have been destroyed, with a further 958 damaged since the war escalated.¹⁶ Many institutions have been repurposed as shelters for displaced people, further hindering access to education. Absence of safe spaces, such as educational institutions and child-friendly spaces, has intensified the risk of violence and abuse for out-of-school children.

Health care services have also suffered significantly. As of September 2024, over 1,877 medical facilities have been damaged or destroyed, resulting in the deaths of more than 100 health care workers. The most severely affected areas include Chernihiv, Dnipro, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Mykolaiv and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.¹⁷ The destruction poses significant risks to public health and the effectiveness of medical response efforts. This also aggravates existing health care challenges, potentially leading to increased morbidity and mortality rates among affected populations.

Social protection infrastructure – such as residential care units and social service delivery centres – have also been destroyed or damaged, affecting access to government social services for vulnerable people. The shortage of social workers, many of whom have fled due to hostilities, complicates the situation, es-

pecially in areas where the population has increased rapidly due to high concentrations of IDPs.

Russia's targeted attacks on energy infrastructure have severely worsened living conditions and limited access to water, heating, electricity, and functioning sewage systems. Recent estimates indicate that Ukraine has lost over 60 percent of its energy generation capacity.¹⁸ The Ministry of Energy of Ukraine reports that since the onset of the invasion every region has faced attacks on energy infrastructure, leading to a cumulative loss in 2024 alone exceeding 9 GW in capacity. Eighteen GW of generation capacity – including facilities such as hydroelectric power plants, thermal power plants and Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporizhzhia NPP – remains under Russian occupation. Between 22 March and 31 August 2024, the Russian Federation's armed forces launched nine waves of large-scale coordinated attacks on Ukraine's energy production system.¹⁹

One of the most significant attacks occurred on 26 August 2024, when Russia launched a coordinated assault involving 236 drones and missiles leaving approximately four million Ukrainians in 12 regions without electricity.²⁰ Some parts of the country, including Kyiv, faced blackouts lasting 12 hours or more daily.

Individuals with low mobility, older persons, and families with small children are struggling to safely leave or reach apartments in high-rise buildings with lifts out of order. Widespread traffic light outages create road hazards for drivers and pedestrians, while commuters have faced challenges reaching their work due to public transport disruptions. Telecommunications have become unstable or inaccessible as mobile data networks are overloaded every time power cuts disrupt Wi-Fi connections.²¹

As winter 2024-2025 approaches, the anticipated rise in electricity consumption due to freezing temperatures will heighten the impact of strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Despite extensive mitigation efforts by Ukraine's authorities, energy companies, and

16 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (July 2024) Ukraine Protection analysis update July 2024, at https://www.unhcr.org/ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2024/07/ukraine_protection_analysis_update_-_july_2024-compressed.pdf.

17 Ministry of Health of Ukraine (September 2024) United for Justice: the conference discussed numerous attacks by the enemy army on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure and Russia's responsibility, at <https://moz.gov.ua/en/united-for-justice-the-conference-discussed-numerous-attacks-by-the-enemy-army-on-ukrainian-civilian-infrastructure-and-russia-s-responsibility>.

18 UNHCR, Ukraine: quarterly operational update, June 2024, at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/110278>.

19 United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (September 2024) Attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure: harm to the civilian population, at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2a2d87ae29f34207909828d7198c337c>.

20 Ministry of Energy of Ukraine (September 2024) In two years, Russia has attacked Ukraine's energy sector more than 1,000 times: German Galushchenko, at <https://mev.gov.ua/novyna/za-dva-roky-rosiya-atakuvala-ukrayinsku-enerhetyku-ponad-1000-raziv-herman-halushchenko>.

21 United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (September 2024) Attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure: harm to the civilian population, at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2a2d87ae29f34207909828d7198c337c>.

humanitarian and recovery agencies, the country is expected to experience a significant electricity deficit. Daily power outages may leave civilians without essential electricity to heat their homes, operate water pumps, and facilitate online education for children. In some areas, this could also lead to a loss of heating, further exacerbating the humanitarian situation.²²

Given these extensive challenges, international support is essential for recovery efforts. The EU4Recovery – Empowering Communities in Ukraine project (hereafter – the Project) was launched to address the urgent aftermath of the invasion, symbolizing solidarity and commitment to Ukraine’s recovery.

The Project is a partnership between the EU and UNDP, with participation from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).²³

The aim of the Project is to deliver the key outputs of the EU Emergency Support Programme for Ukraine, using UNDP’s area-based approach, its extensive network of sub-national partnerships and its technical expertise. The Project strengthens the capacity of Ukraine’s government institutions and civil society to address the immediate needs of the population, and provides ongoing support to the country’s resilience and recovery.

The activities are being implemented in the following target oblasts: Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy. In addition, a limited set of activities are being undertaken in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, taking account of accessibility and security considerations, and the Project remains flexible and responsive to the evolving situation and needs on the ground. In addition, interventions to strengthen community security and maintain the social fabric are being implemented in Chernivtsi and Zakarpattia oblasts, which are destinations for IDPs arriving from war-affected communities.

22 United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (September 2024) Attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure: harm to the civilian population, at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2a2d87ae29f34207909828d7198c337c>.

23 This progress report includes a final narrative and financial input from UN Women, but only a narrative input from UNFPA. The final report of the project will include UNFPA’s financial input for the reporting period.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1:

TARGET COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED ACCESS TO QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

During the reporting period, the Project made significant strides in supporting the authorities to provide improved access to administrative, health care and social services, in particular targeting the most vulnerable people living in remote and war-affected communities. This has been achieved through the provision of tailored packages based on local needs and demand, including equipment and infrastructure support, combined with technical expertise and capacity strengthening.

The Project has provided specialized equipment, vehicles, software, infrastructure rehabilitation and renovation, and capacity-building programmes for local governance structures, social workers, and health care workers. Through this support – both hard and soft – vulnerable populations have improved access to administrative, social and health care services, and local authorities have become more transparent, efficient, and accountable in their operations.

Six communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Sumy oblasts²⁴ have benefitted from fully equipped mobile health clinics. Eight primary health care facilities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts²⁵ have received specialized vehicles to enable family doctors to render medical services to elderly and disabled community members more efficiently. In total these mobile health services have already reached about 130,000 people with basic health services. In addition, 40 external automatic defibrillators and 15 defibrillator monitors with pacemakers have been delivered to health care facilities in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. The gaps in service provision caused by the war have resulted in increased mortality and health problems associated with chronic cardiovascular disease, and this equipment was requested by health care professionals in

war-affected oblasts as critical for enhancing emergency medical care for the population across these oblasts. The Project has also played a critical role in supporting regional health authorities to modernize the emergency medical care system, by upgrading 179 ambulance drivers to emergency medical care technicians.

To address the gap in health service provision caused by the war the Project has facilitated the introduction of telemedicine services in Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Sumy oblasts by providing 50 diagnostic telemedicine kits to six primary health care facilities and training on how to use the software and provide quality telemedicine care for remote or underserved areas. In only 2 months of operations, the telemedicine services have already served 12,500 patients.

As part of efforts to enhance public services for war-affected populations, the ASC in Solonytsivka, Kharkiv Oblast, has been successfully renovated. With 10 new fully equipped workstations, the ASC now delivers essential administrative, legal, and psychosocial services to about 35,000 residents and 16,500 IDPs. Additionally, the modular and stationary ASCs in Pischyn (Kharkiv Oblast) and Kotelva, Reshetylivka and Konotop (Poltava Oblast) have received essential furniture and equipment. These centres are now fully operational, offering improved accessibility and efficiency in delivering public services to vulnerable groups, including those affected by the conflict. About 12,000 beneficiaries have already accessed services through these centres, further highlighting their critical role in supporting the needs of the local population.

Furthermore, 12 communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts are now covered by a network of mobile ASCs, bringing basic administrative services

24 Sribne in Chernihiv Oblast; Nikopol and Zelenodolsk in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Zolochiv and Krasnokutsk in Kharkiv Oblast; and Putyvl in Sumy Oblast.

25 Novhorod-Siverskyi and Koriukivka in Chernihiv Oblast; Kryvyi Rih, Nikopol and Vilnohirs'k in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Vysokopillya in Kherson Oblast; Lozova in Kharkiv Oblast; and Shyroky in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.

closer to citizens, especially vulnerable groups. In total, some 34,000 people (including 19,500 women, 20,000 older people and 4,000 persons with disabilities) have already received much-needed administrative services with Project support.

The Project also supported the establishment of six MPC teams by delivering specialized vehicles to target communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Poltava and Sumy oblasts. These teams provide in-home medical, nursing, and psychological support, ensuring patients receive care in a familiar environment. The vehicles, equipped with lifts, wheelchairs, and assistive tools, enhance access to palliative care, especially for older people, persons with disabilities, and IDPs who often lack family care networks.

In its efforts to enhance digital governance and administrative efficiency, the Project provided modern

Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMSs) to the regional authorities in Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv and Poltava oblasts. The software has allowed the local authorities to streamline processes, reduce paperwork, and improve the overall speed and quality of service delivery across various social service providers. Moreover, an online case management cabinet was successfully integrated into the Social Web Portal of the Ministry of Social Policy (MSP). This electronic system replaces traditional paper-based processes, streamlining case management and improving the efficiency of social service delivery.

To support the vulnerable population, including IDPs and veterans, the Project supported the implementation of 12 social infrastructure civic initiatives, which have already benefitted almost 39,000 people through psychological and legal assistance and various integration activities.

OUTPUT 1.1

INCREASED CAPACITY OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES, PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER SERVICES TO PROVIDE QUALITY GENDER-RESPONSIVE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES (MHPSS)

Activity 1.1.1. Procurement and delivery of medical equipment and supplies to meet critical needs of hospitals and other health care facilities in project target areas; support to process optimization and service delivery, including through the establishment of mobile services.

The ongoing war in Ukraine is continuing to fuel a humanitarian crisis, exacerbating existing health care challenges and putting immense pressure on medical services and infrastructure. The ongoing destruction of hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies limits access to essential health care services in frontline communities. Persistent attacks on power plants in Ukraine have left many without a consistent energy supply and health care facilities unable to provide uninterrupted services. The shortage of human resources for health, especially in oblasts close to the frontline areas also negatively affects the provision of medical services.²⁶ Moreover, as evidenced by recent assessments, con-

flict-related conditions have exacerbated the barriers to the population – especially those from vulnerable groups and those living in remote and frontline areas – accessing essential medical services. Over 34 percent of households in Ukraine have reported encountering at least one barrier when seeking primary health care.²⁷

The procurement and delivery of essential medical equipment, along with process optimization and service delivery enhancements – including the establishment of mobile services – are critical for Ukraine, particularly in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy Oblasts, where the ongoing war is causing substantial challenges. This comprehensive support will help health care facilities manage heightened patient loads and sustain critical services in these challenging times.

Mobile clinics are indispensable for providing medical services during the wartime due to their capacity

26 Health Cluster, World Health Organization (August 2024) Ukraine: Health Cluster Bulletin #8, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-health-cluster-bulletin-8-august-2024>.

27 Health Cluster, World Health Organization (August 2024) Ukraine: Public Health Situation Analysis (PHSA) (August 2024), at https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-public-health-situation-analysis-phsa-august-2024?_gl=1*ts1751*_ga*ODY2NTUzMDU5LjE3Mjg4OTgxMTU.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTcyODg5ODExNC4xLjEuMTcyODg5OTAwOS42MC4wLjA.



Transferring the two specialized vehicles to support the work of family doctors in Novhorod-Siverskyi and Koryukivka communities in Chernihiv Oblast, Chernihiv, 29 August 2024. Photo credit: Oleksandr Bohachenko / UNDP in Ukraine

to reach populations in war zones or areas with limited access to conventional health care facilities. To ensure provision of quality health care services at regional and local levels, the Project supported the introduction of mobile clinics in six target communities: Sribne in Chernihiv Oblast; Nikopol and Zelenodolsk in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Zolochiv and Krasnokutsk in Kharkiv Oblast; and Putyvl in Sumy Oblast. This initiative is intended to support an adaptive health care system capable of responding to new challenges, including increased workloads, staff shortages, limited equipped facilities, and the need for specialized medical care.

Moreover, eight vehicles for primary health care facilities have been delivered to Novhorod-Siverskyi and Koriukivka in Chernihiv Oblast; Kryvyi Rih, Nikopol, and Vilnohirsk in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Vysokopillya in Kherson Oblast; Lozova in Kharkiv Oblast; and Shyroky in Zaporizhzhia Oblast. These specialized cars can now enhance the capacity of primary health care facilities to effectively serve their communities, thereby improving access to health care services in challenging conditions. As of today, some 130,000 people have already received vital medical assistance with the support from these mobile services.

Furthermore, the Project is supporting local efforts to integrate new approaches to organizing emergency medical care at pre-hospital level. Given the vital role of Basic Life Support knowledge – along with the availability of first aid kits and defibrillators – in improving emergency outcomes, the Project initiated procurement of essential medical devices. In addition, the Project organized three comprehensive two-day training sessions for the staff of health care institutions in Pervomaiskiy (Kharkiv Oblast), Koryukivka (Chernihiv Oblast), and Zaporizhzhia city. In total 84 participants, including 56 women, successfully completed the training.

A total of 40 external automatic defibrillators and 15 defibrillator-monitors with pacemakers were procured for health care facilities in Kryvyi Rih, Pokrovske, and the Dnipro Centre for Emergency Medical Care in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Voznesensk and Mykolaiv in Mykolaiv Oblast; Myrhorod and Poltava in Poltava Oblast; Sumy and Konotop in Sumy Oblast; Lozova, Pervomaiskiy, and Nova Vodolaha in Kharkiv Oblast; and Shyroky and the Zaporizhzhia Centre for Emergency Medical Care in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.



Regional communication platform intended to strengthen cooperation among representatives of local self-government bodies, the NHSU and the medical community in Kharkiv, April 2024. Photo credit: Ihor Kushnariov / UNDP in Ukraine

Activity 1.1.2. Equipment and training for medical colleges, with a focus on training paramedics and emergency medical technicians.

In partnership with the National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU), the Project [organized](#) a series of communication platforms in Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Poltava and Mykolaiv oblasts in February-April 2024, gathering 240 participants from local governments, the NHSU, and the health care community. These events were intended to strengthen collaboration, present health care analytics, and address regional health care needs, fostering a co-ordinated effort towards building a healthier community. At the events, the participants presented analysis and current medical programmes, identified urgent needs in the field of medicine at oblast and community levels, and discussed other medical topics.

Additionally, 179 drivers from regional emergency medical care and disaster medicine centres (all men: 30 from Chernihiv Oblast, 60 from Donetsk Oblast, 29 from Odesa Oblast, and 60 from Sumy Oblast) completed the Emergency Medical Technician pro-

gramme, delivered by 19 trainers (including 14 women). This comprehensive 200-hour programme is supporting emergency medicine reform and improving the ability of ambulance drivers to respond to emergencies. The Project conducted a series of training sessions in Odesa in partnership with Sumy Medical College, and in Kramatorsk (Donetsk Oblast) in partnership with Bakhmut Medical College in June-September 2024. Currently all the drivers targeted for the training are men. In the future, attracting more women into the profession will be prioritized.

With the knowledge and skills received, the drivers are now able to not only operate the vehicles, but also to provide emergency assistance, together with the medical brigade. The training programme included fundamental aspects of providing emergency medical care, including techniques for checking airways, providing oxygen to the patient, haemorrhage control and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

It is worth noting that emergency medical technicians are medical professionals who, as first responders, provide emergency care to people outside or on their way to hospital. Completing this training is essential for ambulance drivers because, as of 1 January 2025,



Training of Emergency Medical Technicians in Kramatorsk, Donetsk Oblast, December 2023.
Photo credit: Yevhenii Tretiak / UNDP in Ukraine

employees of emergency medical teams and specialists in driver roles will be required to hold the Emergency Medical Technician professional qualification to serve in paramedic teams.²⁸

Furthermore, the Project is working to enhance the capacities of the medical colleges by delivering furniture, modern educational equipment (interactive desks, laptops and projectors) and other learning materials (posters, guides, infographics, mannequins and consumables for practical classes). After a needs assessment, three medical colleges²⁹ were selected to be equipped for simulation and in computer labs, and for assistance with training of graduate nurses and paramedics.

Procurement of essential furniture and appliances has been completed. All the required educational equipment and learning materials will be procured and transferred to the medical colleges by the end of 2024.

Activity 1.1.3. Further support to epidemiological surveillance and control, early warning system, and the introduction of a sustainable system of infection prevention and infection control with a particular emphasis on stochastic infection spread in health facilities at the subnational level.

Under this Activity, the Project is intended to further enhance the capacities of hospitals in target oblasts to detect and respond to epidemiological threats. Establishing a robust infection control programme in each facility is crucial for safeguarding both patients and health care workers. This involves implementing comprehensive protocols and procedures that promote collaboration among medical facilities and stakeholders. The overarching goal is to mitigate the various infections that pose risks to public health. Additionally, effective infection prevention strategies can reduce the need for antibiotics and specific medications, thereby improving overall health outcomes.

²⁸ Under Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution 1114 of 21 November 2012.

²⁹ In Lubny, Kremenchuck (Poltava Oblast), and Kryvyi Rih (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast).

To support these objectives, the Project organized a series of training sessions for medical staff from the target regions. A total of four training sessions on the fundamentals of infection prevention and infection control in health care facilities were conducted, with two sessions each held in Dnipro and Poltava. These sessions engaged 62 health care professionals (53 women) from Chernihiv, Dnipro, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

Furthermore, in April 2024, the Project received the results of an audit conducted in Poltava Oblast Clinical Hospital, to assess the feasibility and relevance of introducing information systems across its medical laboratories. This audit evaluated existing IT infrastructure and explored opportunities for automating laboratory processes to optimize resource usage and ensure compliance with ISO 15189 standards.³⁰ Additionally, the audit addressed the necessity of updating laboratory procedures in response to recent changes in Ukrainian medical regulations regarding accreditation and service provision.

The audit findings underscored the importance of introducing a specialized laboratory information system to facilitate laboratory accreditation in accordance with ISO 15189 standards. This integration of laboratory and medical information systems is expected to enhance data access, minimize errors, and streamline operational processes. Furthermore, the audit recommended upgrading IT infrastructure, including increasing server capacity and improving workstations, to support the efficient operation of the new system. These enhancements will not only strengthen infection control measures but also contribute to the overall resilience of health care services in Ukraine. In response to the audit findings the decision was made to procure specialized laboratory information system for the hospital. This activity is currently underway.

Activity 1.1.4. Establish a nationwide system of telemedicine services to ensure equal access for all residents to medical care and dedicated hotlines for the general public and service providers.

In late 2021, the EU and UNDP – as part of the EU Support for the East project – began to introduce tele-

medicine services in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Two complementary approaches were considered: a unified Medical Information System (telemedicine module) in all health care facilities across the entire oblasts, and a comprehensive telemedicine system with a Regional Telemedicine Web-Platform covering all levels of medical care. Building on these initiatives, UNDP is seeking to replicate and expand these approaches to the target regions in the framework of this Project.

The primary goal of these telemedicine services is to ensure equal access to health care for all residents, including those affected by the war, by harnessing telecommunications technology. This system will facilitate online consultations among primary, secondary, and tertiary medical institutions in the target regions. It will grant access to various medical information systems within health care facilities, and provide interfaces for interaction with existing mobile diagnostic centres.

During the reporting period, the Project continued supporting the establishment of the telemedicine service system across the target regions. Specifically, furniture was procured for eight call centres in health care facilities in Poltava (five), Mykolaiv (two) and Luhansk (one) oblasts³¹. Additionally, the contracting process to supply computer equipment for the above-mentioned call centres is underway.

Due to the lack of vendors offering emergency call systems the procurement process was unfortunately cancelled. However, in response to requests from six primary health care facilities in Mykolaiv, Sumy and Kharkiv oblasts, the Project procured and delivered 50 diagnostic telemedicine kits for remotely assessing, diagnosing, and managing medical conditions through telecommunications technology. More specifically, telemedicine kits (including preinstalled software) were purchased for health care facilities in Novyi Buh (15 kits) and Bashtanka (10 kits) communities in Mykolaiv Oblast, Konotop (10 kits) and Sumy (10 kits) communities in Sumy Oblast, and Pervomaiskyi (5 kits) community in Kharkiv Oblast. The delivered equipment can now help provide convenient access to medical services for patients, especially those in remote or underserved areas, and also contribute to increasing the quality of health care services in each community by enabling timely interventions and con-

30 International Standards Organization (2022) [ISO 15189 Medical laboratories – Requirements for quality and competence, at <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/en/#iso:std:iso:15189:ed-4:vt:en>] contains requirements for the medical laboratory to plan and implement actions to address risks and opportunities for improvement.

31 Luhansk Oblast: Rubizhne Central District Hospital. Mykolaiv Oblast: Mykolaiv City Hospital #4 (two call centres). Poltava Oblast: Lubny Primary Health Care Centre, Kremenchuk Intensive Care Hospital, Myrhorod Intensive Care Hospital, Poltava Oblast Hospital and Poltava Emergency Medical Care Centre.

sultations with health care professionals. In just two months of operation, nearly 12,500 patients in local communities have received telemedicine consultation services.

Activity 1.1.5. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programmes for health care and other specific care providers and first line responders.

Under this activity, the Project is organizing mobile teams for palliative care (vehicle-based), which will comprise health care professionals, including doctors and psychologists, as well as social workers. MPC teams are specialized health care units that provide comprehensive and compassionate care to individuals with advanced, life-limiting illnesses, focusing on improving their quality of life. These teams often visit patients in their homes, delivering medical, nursing, and psychological support, thereby enabling patients to receive care in a familiar and comfortable environment. They are also experts in managing pain and other distressing symptoms associated with serious illnesses, striving to enhance patient comfort and

well-being. In some cases, the MPC teams transition patients to hospice care when curative treatments are no longer effective, ensuring end-of-life care that emphasizes comfort and dignity. The provision of palliative care is crucial for vulnerable groups such as older people, persons with disabilities and, in particular, IDPs, who may have limited family care and support networks in their new locations.

During the reporting period, the Project supported the establishment of six MPC teams by [delivering](#) specialized vehicles for the provision of palliative services in Nizhyn (Chernihiv Oblast), Kamianske (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Romny and Konotop (Sumy Oblast), Myrhorod (Poltava Oblast), and Nova Vodolaha (Kharkiv Oblast). The vehicles are equipped with lifts for patients with limited mobility, as well as with wheelchairs and other assistive equipment. The initiative was designed to facilitate access to palliative care for patients and their families by providing them with comfortable and safe transportation to health care facilities. This step will improve the quality of life of people needing palliative care, and the availability of this essential medical service for those who require it most, especially in remote areas.



Handing over of six specialized palliative care vehicles to health care institutions in five target oblasts, Kyiv, 1 March 2024.
Photo credit: Serhii Minenko / UNDP in Ukraine



Participants at a training session for physical therapists on rehabilitation, Lviv, Ukraine, 25 March 2024.
Photo credit: Olha Zaliziak / UNDP in Ukraine

Additionally, on 29-30 August 2024 in Chernihiv a training session focused on the psychological resilience of medical staff (with the goal of addressing and preventing widespread risk of burnout) was conducted for 14 medical personnel (9 women) at Chernihiv City Hospital No. 2.

Furthermore, in response to health care workers' needs arising from the war, psychological relief rooms are being established in health care facilities across target communities in Ukraine. These rooms are intended to support medical workers by providing psychological assistance and creating spaces for psychosocial support, enhancing their psycho-emotional self-regulation and resilience.

During the reporting period, the Project supported the establishment of 10 psycho-emotional relief rooms for the staff of health care facilities in Vilnohirs'k and Nikopol communities of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Konotop, Romny, and Bilopil'ya communities in Sumy Oblast; Lozova and Krasnokutsk communities in Kharkiv Oblast; Nizhyn and Novhorod-Siverskyi communities in Chernihiv Oblast; and Kremenchuk community in Poltava Oblast. The outfitting of the rooms with required furniture and household items is currently be-

ing finalized, and the rooms are expected to become fully functional by November 2024.

The Project – in collaboration with the Ukrainian Catholic University, Patients of Ukraine, and the UNBROKEN National Rehabilitation Centre, – organized and conducted two training activities to raise competencies of health care workers to provide rehabilitation services. The first training session, entitled *Rehabilitation: The School of Physical Therapists of the Future*, took place in March 2024 and brought together 24 health care workers (11 women) specializing in rehabilitation. The second session, entitled *Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Provision of Rehabilitation Services*, was held in June 2024 and was attended by 29 physical therapists (21 women) from Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Chernihiv oblasts. The training was intended to provide the participants with up-to-date knowledge and skills in the field of rehabilitation, stimulate exchange of experience between specialists from different regions and promote the development of a multidisciplinary approach to providing rehabilitation services. The provision of rehabilitation services in Ukraine is critical given the number of veterans and war-affected civilians requiring such services.

OUTPUT 1.2

SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE BETTER CAPACITATED TO DELIVER, AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED POPULATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY ENABLED TO ACCESS SOCIAL SERVICES IN TARGET AREAS

Activity 1.2.1. Needs assessment of social care services in project target areas to meet increased demand for existing services and recommendations for potential new services that respond to the crisis.

The war in Ukraine has led to a surge in demand for social services, especially for displaced people, survivors of violence, and other vulnerable groups. To provide evidence-based support intended to address these challenges and enhance the quality and accessibility of social services, the Project conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of social services. The analysis of social services was conducted in 368 communities across Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy oblasts, to identify unmet needs and assess the level of resident satisfaction ([Annex 6](#)).

These efforts led to the development of tailored recommendations, including:

- Improving the management and administration of social service delivery in communities.
- Enhancing the staffing and technical support of the social service system.
- Building the capacity of social service providers.
- Strengthening communication with residents of territorial communities.
- Digitalizing the process of identifying population needs and providing social services.

Implementing these recommendations will contribute to creating a more responsive and efficient social service system in each target oblast, better equipped to meet the evolving demands of the population. Additionally, a study of levels of satisfaction with social services provision was carried out in these six oblasts.



Summing up the results of a year-long project to develop the social service delivery system in partner communities at a national conference in Kyiv on 20 June 2024. Photo credit: Serhii Minenko / UNDP in Ukraine

Based on its findings, comprehensive regional social service programmes were created to address the specific needs and enhance the social service systems in each oblast.

The Project has organized and conducted regional conferences in each of the target oblasts (Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy), highlighting the achievements and results of the implemented activities and intended to improve social work and service delivery systems. These conferences, attended by 243 participants (200 women), presented key outcomes, discussed the development of social service programmes, and examined the project's impact on social service trends in each region.

Participants, including representatives from local governments, social service departments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), comprehensively reviewed the current state of social services. They explored innovative tools such as interactive maps for planning and collaborated on strategies to further advance social services at regional level. The conferences not only consolidated efforts but also strengthened cooperation among stakeholders, laying a solid foundation for continued improvement of social service provision. The research results were also presented at an event in Kyiv on 20 June 2024, engaging 70 representatives of the MSP (47 women), and the international community. Moreover, a series of capacity-building activities was held to equip members of the working groups with the skills and knowledge the need. Six two-day training sessions were conducted between February and April 2024, focusing on the development of targeted programmes to improve the social service system in the regions, based on the results of the needs assessment. A total of 119 participants (102 women), all members of working groups, took part in these sessions to identify social service needs across Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy oblasts.

Activity 1.2.2. Capacity development of social care service providers in project target areas, further support for implementation of the “Electronic case manager” system by local social service providers, and capacities for monitoring social service provision.

The Project is continuing its efforts to enhance the management and administration of social service delivery at both regional and community levels. In this regard, a series of workshops were conducted across six target oblasts (Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetro-

vsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy). These sessions focused on developing local social service programmes, identifying community needs, and proposing actionable recommendations for system improvement. The workshops brought together 116 participants (97 women), including key stakeholders from the local authorities, social service providers and NGOs. As a result, tailored regional programmes were drafted to enhance the delivery and accessibility of social services across the target regions.

Moreover, an online case management cabinet was successfully created and integrated into the MSP Social Web Portal. The case manager online cabinet is intended to replace traditional paper document circulation with a unified electronic case management system. This system has significantly improved the efficiency and quality of social service delivery by automating data collection, organizing documents, and ensuring timely support for individuals and families in need. The case manager online cabinet allow users to obtain structured information with instant search and easy case management. It also ensures that the expert can oversee case management in remote communities, and enables timely intervention by the supervisor of the social service provider.

The Project also supported training on effective communications technologies for crisis counselling and psychosocial assistance, attended by 80 participants (including 76 women). Participants included social protection employees responsible for coordinating and delivering social services, as well as members of multidisciplinary psychosocial and medical teams working with war-related injuries and trauma survivors, including victims of GBV. Key topics covered during the training included techniques for productive communication in crisis situations, motivational counselling methods, communication skills for interacting with vulnerable clients, and self-care practices for service providers.

Activity 1.2.3. Expand access to social care services in project target areas and provide a greater range of specialized services, including for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) survivors and vulnerable groups, and through mobile teams. Support to the system of social service provision through launching of new types of services, successfully piloted in certain regions and with recommendation for replication, and through extension of the network of non-state service providers.

The Project is continuing its work to strengthen the capacities of social service providers to enable them



Transferring software for the electronic case manager's office to the MSP, Kyiv, Ukraine, 25 April 2024.
Photo credit: Serhii Minenko / UNDP in Ukraine

to render vital social services to the most vulnerable groups, including older people, families with children, persons with disabilities, and women affected by the war. To this end, a number of training activities for social service professionals from the target oblasts were conducted during the reporting period.

To foster collaboration and strengthen the capacity of social service providers, a summer school entitled Social Partnership in the System of Social Services Provision at the Community Level was held on 3-7 June 2024 in Chernivtsi Oblast. The event was put on to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of social service providers to deliver social services in communities, based on cooperation between public, private, and non-profit organizations, meeting the needs of all community members. In total, 60 local government officials and social service professionals (51 women) from 11 oblasts of Ukraine³² took part in the summer school and enhanced their competencies in to organize and deliver social services in communities, with a focus on social partnership.

The school activities included training on key topics such as community needs assessment, legal regulations in social service delivery, psychological support for populations during wartime, and implementation of international humanitarian law. As a result, participants gained essential knowledge of managing social services, promoting social partnership, and enhancing their leadership and psychological resilience. Notably, more than 70 percent of the summer school participants stated that the training programme effectively deepened their understanding of effective social service provision, increased their ability to collaborate, and increased their preparedness to provide support in challenging circumstances.

Moreover, a workshop entitled Features of Organizing and Operating Mobile Care Services, Palliative and In-kind Assistance in Communities was held on 15-17 May 2024 in Kyiv. The event was intended to enhance the professional competencies of local authority representatives and specialists responsible for organizing mobile care and palliative services. The workshop focused on familiarizing participants with a roadmap for setting up mobile care services, discuss-

32 Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

ing barriers to implementing this innovative service, and offered practical recommendations to overcome them. The workshop covered crucial topics, including the legal and organizational aspects of setting up the mobile service, human resources and financial management, and strategies for addressing emotional burnout among staff through effective stress management techniques. As a result, 22 participants (17 men and 5 women) acquired valuable knowledge and skills for managing mobile care services and became better equipped to implement these services in their own communities.

In addition, as part of its commitment to strengthening social services in local communities, the Project has been working to support the establishment of mobile social services in communities in Bilenkivka (Zaporizhzhia Oblast), and Khotyn and Sokyriany (Chernivtsi Oblast). Mobile social services are mandated to support the elderly, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable individuals in their homes with health care, psychosocial services, and daily home tasks that support continued independent residential living, and prevent adult institutionalization, family mediation, and other social care services.

To this end, three specialized vehicles will be deployed to strengthen the capacity of local social services to provide support and assistance to various population groups in the field. The delivery of the mobile social service units is scheduled for December 2024. The mobile social service vehicles have special equipment to provide social services to people with limited mobility and residents of remote areas. The vehicles are both a means of quick access for service users and a mobile office equipped with tools to provide a wide range of services, including health care, psychological counselling, support with daily living tasks, and more. Before purchasing the cars and their equipment, a comprehensive needs assessment was conducted for the service providers, based on needs of the elderly and vulnerable population. Based on this analysis, a list of essential equipment was compiled, including items such as a hairdressing kit, a cleaning kit, garden tools, and more. This equipment will help provide the essential social services, aligned to the requirements outlined in the MSP-approved state standard.

Furthermore, to leverage international expertise in social service provision, in early September 2024, the Project organized a study visit to Romania for local government officials and social service professionals from Ukraine. The visit was intended to enhance the professional competencies of the participants and foster the exchange of experience between Ukrainian

and Romanian experts, allowing for the adoption of best practices and innovative approaches in social work in Ukraine. The study visit programme featured visits to six regions in Romania, where participants engaged with local authorities, and explored a range of social service providers, including centres for persons with disabilities, shelters for the homeless, institutions assisting families in difficult circumstances, and facilities supporting survivors of violence.

Throughout the visit, the 16 participants (15 women) gained valuable insights into Romania's social work system, focusing particularly on services for vulnerable populations such as older people, persons with disabilities and refugees. The Ukrainian delegation also explored best practices in decentralization, deinstitutionalization, and integration of social and medical services in a unified framework. Additionally, the tour facilitated new professional connections between Ukrainian and Romanian social work experts, generating interest in incorporating Romania's successful approaches into Ukraine's legislation and local recovery programmes.

In addition, to ensure knowledge building and sharing for local social service providers, the Project developed and published a manual entitled Innovative Approach to Implementing the Social Service: Mobile Social Service for Home Care, Palliative Care and In-Kind Assistance in a Territorial Community (Annex 7). This practical guide describes the principles for establishing and operating, as well as organizing the work of mobile social services providing home care, palliative care, and in-kind assistance. In addition, it presents a step-by-step action plan for local authorities, which can serve as a roadmap for creating a social service in communities.

Activity 1.2.4. Creation and roll-out of training courses for social workers, medical specialists and psychologists to work with war-related injuries and trauma, including work with GBV/CRSV survivors in project target areas.

Creation of effective system of social adaptation for vulnerable groups

One of the key objectives of the Project is to create an enabling environment where social service providers have expanded opportunities to deliver services, while ensuring that the war-affected population gains better access to basic social services, including social adaptation support. In line with the national standards, these services encompass a broad spectrum of mea-

asures that are crucial during both martial law and post-war recovery.

Therefore, to establish social adaptation centres and ensure that social services align with national standards, municipal and community authorities required expert support in two key areas: assessing potential to create and administer social adaptation services to vulnerable groups during wartime and post-war life; and developing and implementing regulations, methodological recommendations, and innovative approaches to establish and enhance the system of social adaptation within the community.

In this regard, the Project is working to enhance the delivery by authorities of social adaptation services across 26 communities in Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Poltava oblasts. The primary objective is to provide better support to vulnerable populations affected by the war, and ensure improved access to essential services, social protection, and psychological support.

To support implementation of this activity, the League of Social Workers NGO was contracted to provide expert assistance, capacity strengthening and monitoring to local authorities and to support their development of local regulatory frameworks to expand the network of social service providers. In addition to providing technical expertise for the regulatory framework, the training activities focused on equipping social workers in the target communities with the knowledge they need to render social adaptation services to vulnerable groups, including older people, and persons with disabilities, including physical and/or sensory impairments. These social adaptation services include psychological assistance, legal advice, and skills training to boost their employment prospects, among other services. Moreover, in the framework of this activity, local authorities will receive knowledge to assess their capacity to offer these services effectively and to integrate all the regulatory and methodological guidelines into their work.

The results of this initiative are expected by December 2024, and will include the following:

- All 26 communities will have gathered and analysed data on social adaptation needs, particularly focusing on vulnerable groups affected by the war.
- Local authorities will have developed and implemented regulatory frameworks to establish effective social adaptation systems that are tailored to

their unique community needs, and will open new social service centres as necessary.

- Communities will benefit from ongoing expert guidance and supervision to effectively integrate the developed regulatory frameworks and recommendations into their local public service management systems.
- The knowledge and best practices acquired throughout this project will be systematized and disseminated to promote wider adoption of successful strategies in other regions.

Delivery of vehicles providing mobile services for the social adaptation centres

To further support the local authorities to deliver quality and timely social adaptation services, the Project is finalizing the procurement of six specialized vehicles to facilitate the transfer of both recipients and providers of social adaptation services. These vehicles are currently being equipped and will be delivered to the communities of Pervomaisk (Mykolaiv Oblast), Mena (Chernihiv Oblast), Zmiiv (Kharkiv Oblast), Kryvyi Rih (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), and Hlyboka and Sokyriany (Chernivtsi Oblast) by the end of 2024.

Support for administering assisted living services in residential institutions

As a part of its commitment to improving social services for vulnerable populations and in response to a request from the MSP, the Project is also working to develop individual supported living (ISL) arrangements for people with physical or sensory impairments and mental disorders. The initiative is intended to provide tailored support and care to meet the specific needs of these people, facilitating their integration into family and community settings. The overarching goal is to transform institutional care systems into community-based ISL models, aligning with the Guidelines on Deinstitutionalization of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.³³ This initiative is being piloted in the selected communities in Chernihiv (Chernihiv and Ponorny) and Chernivtsi (Chernivtsi and Sokyriany) oblasts.

As an initial step, the Project conducted research to identify critical gaps in care delivery, with a focus on the challenges of arranging assisted living services in residential institutions, particularly in de-occupied and host oblasts, including those with displaced service providers.

33 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2021) Regional consultations and Guidelines on deinstitutionalisation – Article 19, at www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/crpd/regional-consultations-and-guidelines-deinstitutionalisation-article-19

Building on the results of the conducted research, a set of recommendations was provided to facilitate the successful transition of individuals from institutional care to supported living in the community. This included, specifically, building the capacity of social care institutions through educational programmes for staff, reviewing relevant regulations, and providing tailored psychological and socialization support to residents of social care institutions, to help increase their motivation for independent living in the community.

Building on the results of the comprehensive research into existing assisted living services and the challenges identified, new approaches to ISL will be designed and implemented in the four pilot communities, to ensure that new service models are responsive to community-specific requirements. In addition, a detailed guide will be developed, offering unified recommendations for ISL implementation in communities, and providing a robust framework for organizing and delivering ISL services across the target oblasts.

Furthermore, in April 2024, a two-day training session was held in Kyiv, organized by the NGO Social Synergy. The event focused on the developing and introducing supported living services for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities. The training session covered topics such as budget planning for social services, legal frameworks, and the role of stakeholders in creating inclusive environments. A total of 44 participants (36 women) actively participated in the sessions.

Moreover, the Project facilitated analysis of the individual and collective needs of social service recipients, by two multidisciplinary teams. This activity encompassed 10 facilities and involved 104 individuals across the targeted regions. Additionally, a technical assessment was conducted on the social service facilities designated to provide these essential services.

As this project advances toward completion, local authorities and social care providers in Chernihiv and Chernivtsi oblasts will be better equipped to deliver ISL services, improving the quality of life for vulnerable populations through community-based living solutions.

OUTPUT 1.3

ACCESS TO ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES IMPROVED THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY SOLUTIONS

Activity 1.3.1. Reconstruction/refurbishment and equipping of ASCs as integrated services centres in war-affected areas; expansion of ASC infrastructure in IDP-hosting communities.

The Project has continued to provide essential support for the reconstruction, repair and establishment of ASCs as hubs for delivering integrated services in selected communities across the target regions. This support also focuses on implementing best practices applied from eastern Ukraine, expanding access to basic public service infrastructure in war-affected regions, and improving the overall quality of that infrastructure. In addition, the Project is utilizing pre-fabricated building structures (modules) to construct ASCs in the target communities, ensuring the provision of integrated services. To further enhance the effectiveness of these centres, the Project also provides essential equipment and furniture, enabling the ASCs to operate effectively and seamlessly deliver services.

Following the escalation of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, numerous communities experienced severe infrastructure damage, including social service facilities. Vulnerable groups such as IDPs, older people, and persons with disabilities have faced mounting challenges in accessing essential public services. To address this, efforts have been made to construct modular centres offering vital services such as administrative support, social care, and psychosocial assistance in communities that were occupied, experienced active hostilities, suffered significant infrastructure damage or are hosting a substantial number of IDPs.

The initiative involves the construction of six modular ACSs in Bashtanka (Mykolaiv Oblast), Dymir (Kyiv Oblast), Velyki Sorochyntsi (Poltava Oblast), Zhovti Vody (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Kryvyi Rih (Dnipro Oblast), and Novopokrovka (Kharkiv Oblast). The centres are being built in full compliance with Ukrainian national building codes, ensuring the provision of essential services to affected populations. Contractors are required to adhere strictly to safety, environmental, and labour standards, which include debris clear-

ance, site safety, and meeting all specified technical requirements. Additionally, 72 positions have been created for ASC administrators to oversee service delivery at these modular centres, contributing to the effective management of community needs and fully funded from local budgets.

By December 2024, it is anticipated that these centres will be fully operational, providing safe, accessible services to those in need across the six regions. This milestone will mark a significant step toward strengthening local social service infrastructure and ensuring vulnerable populations receive the support they require.

Furthermore, as part of efforts to improve public services for war-affected populations, the renovation of the ASC in Solonytsivka, Kharkiv Oblast, has been successfully completed. In addition, the Project supplied essential equipment and furniture for establishing 10 workplaces in the centre. This renovation complied with national regulatory standards, ensuring both safety and quality, while bringing essential administrative and social services closer to the community. Now fully operational, the ASC provides critical support, including legal, administrative, and psycho-social services, to the local population affected by the conflict. The newly opened ASC can now provide vital administrative services to almost 35,000 community residents, as well as 16,500 IDPs. In September and October 2024 more than 7,400 individual services were already provided to the community.

Moreover, the purchase of furniture and equipment for both the modular ASCs and the stationary ASCs

in Kotelva, Reshytylivka, Konotop (Poltava Oblast) and Pischyn (Kharkiv Oblast) has been successfully completed. This acquisition means that the ASCs are now fully equipped to provide essential services to the local population. With upgraded infrastructure, both modular and stationary facilities offer improved accessibility and efficiency in delivering public services to vulnerable groups affected by the conflict. The centres are now fully functional and optimally prepared to meet the diverse needs of their communities.

Activity 1.3.2. Administrative services available in war-affected target areas and hard-to-reach communities through mobile service delivery vehicles.

The Project has provided expert support for developing a community service model. As part of this initiative an assessment will be carried out of the current state of integrated service provision in selected target communities, followed by the creation of a mobile ASC model.

This approach complements the establishment of stationary modular centres (ASCs, DIIA Centres) and is intended to extend services to remote areas within the target regions. To support this outreach, the Project is also working to deliver fully equipped vehicles, enabling service providers to render a wide range of services directly in the field.

In May and July 2024, a total of 12 mobile ASCs were delivered to communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia



Transferring mobile ASC vehicles to six territorial communities in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv oblasts. Photo credit: Danylo Pavlov / UNDP in Ukraine

oblasts.³⁴ These mobile units are fully equipped to improve access to essential public services, particularly for remote and vulnerable populations, such as older people and persons with disabilities. The outfitting of the cars includes free internet access, heating, air conditioning, ventilation, electricity, built-in furniture, computers and office equipment. Designed to be accessible, each mobile ASC features a single entry-exit point with easy-to-navigate stairways and assistive setup, ensuring that older visitors and persons with disabilities can access services comfortably. The initiative is designed to ensure that residents of these hard-to-reach areas can access vital government services without the need for long-distance travel, while also improving the quality of administrative services, particularly in regions affected by the ongoing conflict. In total, at least 34,000 people (including 19,500 women, 20,000 older people and 4,000 persons with disabilities) have already accessed much-needed administrative services through the mobile service centres and mobile ASC cases provided by the Project.

To further support administrative service delivery in war-affected areas, six special printers are being procured for issuing driver's licences and technical passports for transport. These printers will be installed in ASCs located in Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Mykolaiv and Poltava oblasts, helping to ensure that essential services are available to residents of remote and conflict-affected communities.

Activity 1.3.3. Further digitalization of public services to provide e-document software, as well as procurement of tools to transfer administrative services to online format.

The Project is supporting the target communities to align their activities with the national Digital Transformation Policy. This support includes purchasing and installing the necessary tools and equipment that will enable the use of digital services, including developing basic infrastructure, introducing electronic services; implementing sectoral digital projects in such sectors as medicine, education, transport, infrastructure, environment, culture, e-democracy and security, and implementing activities to increasing the level of digital literacy.

During the reporting period, several key activities were launched to improve digital governance and administrative efficiency across various regions in Ukraine. The Project provided various updated and modern EDMs to authorities, based on existing training, hardware and software capabilities, with the activity completed by the end of 2024. In Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, implementation of the Doc PRO 3 Automated Document Management System began, with the system successfully installed on 405 workstations across local executive bodies and territorial communities.

This initiative has streamlined document management, communication, and public service delivery, especially for IDPs. The initiative also included ongoing technical support, troubleshooting, and specialized staff training to ensure a smooth transition to digital administration. Similarly, in Mykolaiv Oblast, the Megapolis, DocNet EDMS and Business Process Automation systems were installed on 350 workstations, and 23 passport loggers were set up across various departments. This activity has already streamlined document processing and storage, and improved service delivery within local authorities, with technical support and staff training ensuring proper integration of the system.

Furthermore, the Project has supported Nizhyn City Council with the installation of the EDMS software named MIA DOKUMENTOOBIG on 100 workstations. After careful market research, this system was selected for its strong customization and technical support capabilities. The initiative, launched in mid-2024, includes nine months of technical support and staff training to ensure effective use and seamless integration, resulting in more efficient document management, and enhanced public service delivery. Meanwhile, Poltava Regional Council has been assisted to expand and modernize its existing ASKOD EDMS, which serves over 5,000 users across city and village councils. The modernization efforts include nine months of technical support, system upgrades, and staff training for 10 representatives. These upgrades are intended to further improve document management and the operational capacity of the Oblast Council, ensuring better service delivery across Poltava Oblast. All these activities are scheduled for completion by the end of 2024, bringing significant improvement to digital governance, transparency, and administrative efficiency across the target regions.

34 Voznesensk, Pervomaisk, and Bashtanka communities in Mykolaiv Oblast; Kamianske, Novooleksandrivka, and Kryvyi Rih communities in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast; Izium in Kharkiv Oblast, Kushugum in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Mena in Chernihiv Oblast, Pyriatyn in Poltava Oblast, and Romny and Shostka in Sumy Oblast.



The Project handed over 350 licences for a modern EDMS to Mykolaiv Oblast State Administration, Mykolaiv, 23 May 2024.
Photo credit: Dmytro Sazonov / UNDP in Ukraine

Moreover, as a part of its comprehensive efforts to increase the transparency and accountability of the local authorities, the Project conducted several tailored anti-corruption capacity-building activities.

From 16 to 18 November 2023, the Project organized the third All-Ukrainian Anti-Corruption Moot Court (VAM 3.0), designed to enhance theoretical knowledge of criminal law, practical skills in investigating corruption cases, and understanding of court proceedings. A total of 153 teams from 23 regions of Ukraine, including Crimea, participated in the competition, with the largest contingents from Kyiv, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk. The event focused on situational cases, such as top corruption investigations and civil confiscation procedures, and the best 10 teams competed in the final stages in Lviv. Judges included experienced professionals from the National Anti-corruption Bureau of Ukraine, the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative, and the High Anti-Corruption Court. Participants attended specialized training on search procedures and civil confiscation, further developing their legal expertise. The winning team, RONAVI, from Lviv National University and Ukrainian Catholic University, earned an internship with the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative.

Between May and June 2024, a series of online webinars focused on whistleblowing and public service practices were conducted. These sessions were designed to enhance participants' skills in managing legal and administrative whistleblower cases, with an emphasis on transparency and accountability. The sessions provided 115 FLAS lawyers and advocates (77 women) with valuable knowledge and practical tools to effectively handle whistleblower cases.

In March and April 2024, training sessions were held in Kyiv and Lviv, focusing on the development and role of whistleblowers in preventing corruption. These training activities were conducted as part of a broader initiative to enhance whistleblower protection in Ukraine. The sessions addressed topics such as the legal definition of whistleblowers, international standards for their protection, and the mechanisms of state protection available in Ukraine. Experts from the Foundation for Institutional Development led the discussions, emphasizing the importance of whistleblowers in upholding democratic values and transparency. Overall, 50 participants (38 women), including legal professionals, public officials, and civil society representatives, took part in these training sessions.



EU4Recovery organized training sessions for lawyers from free legal aid centres in Kyiv.
Photo credit: Oleksii Tishevskiy / UNDP in Ukraine

Another training event, entitled Modern Approaches to Anti-Corruption Training: Life Hacks for Authorized Officers was held in Poltava on 25-27 May 2024. This training programme was designed for the authorized anti-corruption officers of local self-government bodies, and it focused on modern approaches to teaching anti-corruption measures, providing participants with practical insights and ‘life hacks’ for their roles. Over the three days, 24 participants (19 women) engaged in discussions and activities to enhance their understanding of corruption risks, effective risk management strategies, and the role of leadership in promoting integrity. The event also highlighted the importance of communication and public awareness in preventing corruption.

In addition, a training programme entitled Training on Monitoring Compliance with Anti-Corruption Legislation: Tips for the Authorized Officer (Conflict of Interest, Analysis of Contractors, Approval Process, and Anti-Corruption Expertise) took place in Poltava on 29-31 May 2024. The training was held to equip authorized officers with the knowledge and skills needed to maintain compliance and organizational integrity. It focused on identifying, managing, and resolving conflicts of interest, analysing contractors, and ensuring adherence to anti-corruption legislation. A total of 29 participants (24 women) received practical advice on handling these tasks, including conducting anti-corruption expertise and the proper processes for approving projects and contracts.

OUTPUT 1.4

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE REFURBISHED OR REPAIRED TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY IN PROJECT TARGET AREAS

Activity 1.4.1. War-damage assessment and initial reconstruction planning undertaken to support safe returns process and infrastructure redevelopment necessary to deliver of basic public services.

The Project continues to address the hazardous consequences of external impacts, particularly the damage to buildings and structures, including incomplete construction projects and minimize potential material losses related their maintenance and restoration.

To respond to this challenge, the Project established mobile teams of engineers dedicated to conducting damage assessments in the field. These teams are equipped with the tools, transport, and training they need to use UNDP damage assessment methodologies.

Since 2023, mobile engineering teams have been actively operating in Dnipropetrovsk, Luhansk and Kherson oblasts to perform on-site damage assessments. The huge scope of damage caused by Russia's aerial strikes has resulted in a significant lack of commercial capacity to conduct timely and qualified damage inspections, which are precursors for authorities to carry out necessary reconstruction work. The mobile teams for the inspection of the technical condition of buildings, structures and engineering systems are critical for enabling authorities to have a rapid response to communities affected by the war and to restore damaged public infrastructure as fast as possible. The mobile engineering teams surveyed more than 300 sites during the reporting period, of which 50 were rapidly fixed by authorities. This year, Zaporizhzhia Oblast has been added to the project's geographical scope.

During the reporting period, each mobile team in target oblasts received well-equipped vehicles outfitted with various supplemental devices required for capturing and measuring. To enhance technical capabilities further, all the previously provided vehicles will be supplemented with additional tools by the end of 2024, along with one new vehicle designated for the newly targeted oblast.

Activity 1.4.2. Assessments and planning undertaken for IDP management and integration needs undertaken in relation to social infrastructure capacity and options.

Alongside provision of equipment and technology for mobile teams assessing infrastructure damage, efforts have been made to provide methodological support for this activity.

An established interregional working group, comprising representatives displaced from the most affected regions – Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia – has been created to address the challenges caused by war-related destruction.

The working group has developed recommendations for assessing damage to buildings, structures and engineering systems, incorporating both national legislation and the lessons learned from each region's experience in conducting damage assessments.

Members of the group regularly exchange experiences and provide suggestions for improving and updating the methodology. Additionally, capacity-building efforts are underway, including the development of a training programme for damage assessment specialists, scheduled for October 2024.

Activity 1.4.3. Development of social infrastructure to meet service delivery needs of IDP management (shelters, day centres, schools, health facilities, community centres for IDP inclusion and so on).

The Project is designed to support the renovation, repair, repurposing, or expansion of public infrastructure at both the community and subnational levels. This initiative addresses specific needs related to managing IDPs providing shelter, and facilitating their integration into host communities. Additionally, it is intended to strengthen local service providers, empowering them to deliver timely and effective public services that benefit all residents.

During the reporting period, the Project focused on improving social infrastructure to support IDP integration in 26 host communities across Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Poltava oblasts. This included renovating and expanding facilities to meet their needs, as well as strengthening local service providers.

With Project support, the Centre of Social Services in Khotyn community, Chernivtsi Oblast, was equipped with technical tools, furniture, and specialized training for social workers. It now provides services to persons with disabilities, veterans, IDPs, GBV survivors, the elderly, and others. To date, the Centre has served 299 individuals (135 women) and, under a municipal cooperation agreement, is extending its services to an additional 300 IDPs a year.

To further advance the social contracting mechanism, the Project, in partnership with Mukachevo City Council, has focused on strengthening the community's ability to deliver social services to IDPs and other vulnerable groups in displacement-affected areas. The initiative is intended to strengthen the capacity of Mukachevo Resilience Centre to pilot a service to build resilience among affected residents in need of social and psychological support. This initiative backs a pilot MSP project under "How Are You?" the All-Ukrainian Mental Health Programme led by First Lady Olena Zelenska. As of early October 2024, 136 families/individuals were receiving private consultations (80 systematically and 56 on a one-off basis). In addition, in the past three months the Centre [hosted](#) more than 200 group sessions with 1,508 participants in total, including 1,001 women, 29 men, 247 girls, and 231 boys.

In order to enable local IDP Councils to utilize their premises for coordination work, during the reporting period five spaces in the City Council premises in Myrhorod, Kremenchuk, and Lubny in Poltava Oblast, Pavlohrad, and Kamianske in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, were supplied with furniture and office equipment.

In addition, the Project supported four grant and eight quick-impact projects³⁵ aimed at enhancing community services and refurbishing social infrastructure through community-driven initiatives. For instance, in Chernivtsi, a veteran hub called "Place of Strength" was created to support veterans and their families, providing psychological and social services. It is expected that 250 people will receive support in the hub every month. Safety classes and traffic safety measures were implemented in schools in Chernivtsi Oblast (Mamalyga and Khotyn communities), benefiting up to 500 students. In Zakarpattia, a regional centre to provide psychosocial support to the war-affected population was established, and a project in Mukachevo improved access to social and psychological assistance, with an anticipated number of 320 beneficiaries. Additionally, winning projects from the "Toloka of the Ideas" competition in Uzhhorod and Mukachevo focused on creating inclusive spaces and activities for persons with disabilities, children and the elderly, benefiting 2,631 people. Lastly, projects in Chernivtsi and Zakarpattia to strengthen community security through improved lighting, video surveillance, and navigation signs are expected to benefit close to 35,000 people.

³⁵ Quick-impact projects (previously: mini-initiatives) are used to mobilize communities where the public sector is underrepresented, or when an initiative group has formed and is working to address a challenge, but has not yet reached the stage of creating a CSO.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2:

COMMUNITY SECURITY IS ENHANCED, AND THE SOCIAL FABRIC IS MAINTAINED

Throughout the reporting period, the Project made substantial contributions to strengthening community security and increasing social cohesion in the target regions. This was accomplished by providing technical and capacity-building support to security service providers, and by empowering civil society and community members to mobilize and engage with authorities.

In response to the challenges posed by the war, the Project assisted the SES and the National Police of Ukraine (NPU) with various targeted initiatives. These efforts included procuring specialized equipment and vehicles for emergency services; deploying mobile washing stations to enhance sanitary conditions, and trailers to address power outages; as well as providing tailored capacity-building support.

More specifically, SES units in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts received minibuses to enable designated personnel to provide psychological assistance directly at the scene. Additionally, the Main Department of SES in Donetsk Oblast received 11 trailers to transport high-power generators to critical areas, helping to mitigate the impact of ongoing power cuts.

The Project established 5 green rooms and 15 safety classes in seven oblasts across Ukraine. These rooms create a safe environment for working with children and youth who are witnesses, survivors, or even perpetrators of crimes, including domestic and gender-based violence. The introduction of these methodologies provides police units with tools and knowledge to tailor their work to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of this special attention group, while at the same time laying the foundations for increased understanding and trust between young people and law enforcement. The feedback received from the SES and juvenile police highlights already noticeable improvements in the quality of investigative work.

The Project supported the opening of three new police stations in border communities of Ripky, Mykhailo-Kotsiubynske and Horodnia in Chernihiv Oblast.

With the fully equipped facilities, police officers can now respond more effectively to security issues in their communities.

The Project has engaged citizens of all ages and across the vulnerability spectrum in recovery planning and implementation. As of today, 63 dialogue platforms are operational to support inclusive and participatory recovery in Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk, Poltava, Zakarpattia and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. These are Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Groups (CSSCWGs), Community Security and Recovery Working Groups (CSRWGs), and Internally Displaced Person Councils. Some 1,500 people (67 percent women) – from local authorities, police, the SES and civil society – are actively participating in these platforms. A network of the working groups in each oblast operates as a community of practice to ensure local ownership and sustainability of the approach. The Project is continuing to develop the capacities of CSSCWG and IDP council members to enable them address local security issues and improve community security in their settlements.

During the reporting period, over 100 community-based initiatives, developed by members of these dialogue platforms, received funding for implementation. The supported initiatives are helping to enhance community security and social cohesion, ensure gender equality, improve reintegration of internally displaced persons and veterans, and support youth engagement.

The Project contributed to improving community-based structures, capacity systems, and safety nets for preventing and responding to GBV and CRSV in the target oblasts. As a result of these activities, awareness, and knowledge of GBV prevention and response have significantly increased among 2,815,321 individuals (1,953,875 women). This progress was achieved through a range of innovative initiatives, including awareness-raising sessions on critical topics, creating support groups, and implementing social media information campaigns.

To create a safer environment for women and girls, including GBV survivors, the Project is enhancing the capacity of law-enforcement professionals to prevent and address GBV through comprehensive training sessions, and assisting the establishment of dedicated support units.

The Project supported the establishment of 12 women's support groups to increase community engagement and security safety nets for GBV prevention and response in Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava and Donetsk oblasts. Moreover, 10 digital platforms were created in these three oblasts to promote positive behaviour by men and women to prevent GBV and promote gender equality. Overall, 110 women members of the 12 women's support groups and 230 people (180 women) are active members of the digital platforms. In total, 1,518 GBV survivors and vulnerable women and girls received essential legal and psychosocial assistance, with Project support.

To foster community engagement and support, on 18 January 2024 the "I de Ya" Centre for Business Activity and Public Initiatives was opened in Pavlohrad, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. This initiative is intended to enhance communication between public activists and city authorities and facilitate the integration of IDPs into the community. Since its opening, 650 people (455 women) have benefited from the centre's work, and 26 events have been held. The centre offers co-working spaces, educational programme rooms, and meeting facilities, making it the only one of its kind in the region.

The youth ideathon "#SOLVE_IT: Security and Recovery", held in April 2024 in Dnipro, brought together 50 participants (30 women) from 12 oblasts of Ukraine. The event focused on developing innovative solutions in the fields of security and recovery. Participants presented their ideas in a competition, with six of the best projects receiving support from the Project.

Moreover, the Project has launched three Community Resilience Centres in Kamianske (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Kremenchuk (Poltava Oblast) and Nizhyn (Chernihiv Oblast). These centres are flexible hubs offering a variety of services to address the specific needs of local communities, focusing on youth, families, women, and vulnerable groups. During the reporting period, Community Resilience Centres evolved into flexible hubs providing a range of services tailored to the needs of local communities, with a focus on youth, families, women, and vulnerable groups. Throughout the reporting year, the Community Resilience Centres reached 4,872 community mem-

bers, including 3,044 women, 3,891 young people, 554 IDPs and 324 people with disabilities.

Furthermore, the "No Trivia" programme, aimed at preventing psychological violence among youth, included a supervision session with 17 trainers, deepening their knowledge and techniques for nonviolent communication. A total of 485 people (292 women) participated in the No Trivia program during the reporting period.

The Project's "Energy of Your Future" programme included three camps for 82 adolescents, equipping them with vital life skills. In addition, the "Bank of Ideas" initiative supported youth-led projects in Kamianske, Kremenchuk and Nizhyn, focusing on media literacy, civic engagement, and creative mental health support.

The Impactpreneurship 2.0 course on the FUNdraiser platform was launched to establish social enterprises in Ukraine, supporting the reintegration of veterans and IDPs, and engaging youth in the country's recovery. Over 780 participants, including 261 IDPs, 28 veterans, and 183 young entrepreneurs, took part in the three-month programme, forming 109 teams to develop social projects. On 5 September 2024, 15 teams presented their ideas, and 11 received seed funding of about \$140,000, along with three months of mentorship to implement their initiatives.

During the reporting period, a total of 145 grant projects and 39 quick-impact projects were supported, focusing on community security, social cohesion, social entrepreneurship, community policing, access to justice and providing support to veterans and their families, benefitting more than 144,000 people.

Systemic efforts have been made to boost awareness about the availability of FLAS services, thereby contributing to increased usage and self-reliance of the FLAS, and substantially expanding the range of professional development courses available to legal professionals who work within the FLAS, paralegal-volunteers, and other individuals who want to improve their legal skills and knowledge. A noteworthy example is the development of the training of trainers on military-related crimes (both civil- and criminal-related issues) in which 241 lawyers (119 women) participated. Pilot community reintegration action plans are being supported in eight communities across four oblasts, in full collaboration with the relevant line ministries, to ensure alignment between community-based reintegration and the overall vision of the Government of Ukraine on veteran policy.

Moreover, the “I’m a Veteran” platform was upgraded for ASCs in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. The enhanced platform expanded the list of services for veterans and their families from about 100 to 300, ensuring access to these services in one place without long waits. Already 20,000 veterans in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast have

used the “I’m a Veteran” system across the oblast’s ASCs. The Project has also supported the establishment of 11 veterans’ hubs³⁶ throughout 2024, providing spaces for veterans to connect, access resources and receive support.

OUTPUT 2.1

FIRST RESPONDERS HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITIES TO IMPLEMENT EFFICIENT EMERGENCY RESCUE OPERATIONS AND TO SUPPORT PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY IN WAR-AFFECTED AND HOSTING AREAS

Activity 2.1.1. Provide equipment and other support to first responders, including, but not limited to, the State Emergency Service (SES) and National Police of Ukraine (NPU), to provide life-saving rescue services to the war-affected population in the war-affected, transit and host areas.

Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, SES and NPU have emerged as critical institutions addressing the challenges posed by the war.

The SES is dedicated to life-saving efforts, focusing on search and rescue operations, managing evacuations, and providing emergency medical assistance to those affected by the war. Their personnel work tirelessly to mitigate damage caused by shelling and ensure civilian safety in war-torn areas. Since the onset of the war, the SES has conducted 177,867 emergency response visits, extinguished 22,206 fires, rescued 5,374 individuals, and offered psychological support to 262,583 people. They have also defused a total of 532,935 explosive devices, including 4,016 aircraft bombs, and surveyed over 148,731 hectares of land.³⁷

Simultaneously, the NPU plays a crucial role in maintaining law and order, investigating war crimes, and protecting communities from violence. In 2023 alone police units seized 5,168 firearms and 17,815 grenades, have successfully dismantled an international

drug syndicate with annual profits of UAH 135 million, and stopped the activities of 92 organized crime groups.³⁸

However, both the SES and NPU face significant challenges exacerbated by the ongoing war. Frequent shelling has not only posed immediate threats to the safety of their personnel, but has also severely damaged their infrastructure, limiting their operational capabilities. Despite the difficulties, both agencies are striving to support the needs of displaced and vulnerable populations, who are increasingly at risk due to the deteriorating security situation.

In response to the challenges faced by both institutions, the Project assisted with various targeted initiatives. These efforts included procuring essential equipment for emergency services; establishing safety classes for youth; and deploying mobile washing stations to enhance sanitary conditions, and trailers to address power outages.

The Project conducted training sessions for police officers on disability rights; developed a digital solution for effective monitoring of international aid encompassing humanitarian, charitable, and technical assistance; and provided designated vehicles for SGBV mobile groups.

To further strengthen the operational capabilities of SES in Zaporizhzhia Oblast to effectively respond to

36 Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Nizhyn, Pryluky, Ripky (Chernihiv Oblast), Kamianske and Novomoskovsk (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Myrhorod and Poltava (Poltava Oblast), and two hubs in Zaporizhzhia.

37 State Emergency Service (October 2024) Operatyvna informatsiya DSNS shchodo likvidatsiyi naslidkiv vedennya boyovykh diy rosiys'koyu federatsiyeyu ta shchodo roboty pirotekhnichnykh pidrozdiliv [Operational information of the State Emergency Service regarding the liquidation of the consequences of hostilities by the Russian Federation and the work of pyrotechnic units], at <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/operatyvna-informatsiya-dsns-shchodo-likvidatsiyi-naslidkiv-vedennya-boiovykh-dii-rosiiskoiu-federatsiiei-ta-shchodo-roboty-pirotekhnichnykh-pidrozdiliv-3-10-24/>

38 National Police of Ukraine (January 2024) U 2023 rotsi zroslo efektyvnist' rozkryttya politseys'kymy tyazhkykh ta osoblyvo tyazhkykh zlochyniv – Andriy Nyebytov [In 2023, the effectiveness of police detection of serious and especially serious crimes increased - Andrii Nebytov], at <https://www.npu.gov.ua/news/u-2023-rotsi-zroslo-efektyvnist-rozkryttya-politseiskymy-tyazhkykh-ta-osoblyvo-tyazhkykh-zlochyniv-andrii-niebytov#>.

emergency situations, 23 complete sets of firefighter protective clothing – including uniforms, boots, helmets, gloves, and fire rescue belts – were procured and successfully delivered to local units.

In parallel, to instil essential safety concepts in the younger generation – including fire safety, mine safety and civil protection – safety classes have been [established](#) in Ternivka, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, and Trostianets, Sumy Oblast. These classes focus on teaching pupils how to respond to various emergency situations and understand fundamental safety principles, thereby fostering a culture of safety awareness in the community.

On 13 June 2024, a safety classroom was officially opened in Trostianets SES unit. The classroom was equipped with essential furniture and equipment to facilitate effective learning.

The first visitors were pupils from Bilkivska School, who learned how to respond to emergencies, including mine and fire safety, road traffic incidents, first aid for various injuries, and safe behaviour in water-related recreation. This theoretical instruction was complemented by practical skills training provided by the rescue unit of the Trostianets SES unit.

Since 13 June 2024 safety classes have been attended by a total of 765 children under the age of 10 (306 boys and 459 girls) and 334 children aged 10 to 14 (134 boys and 200 girls). The topics covered in these sessions included fire safety and mine safety.

Building on this momentum, a similar safety class was inaugurated in Ternivka on 14 June 2024, also outfitted with essential resources such as an interactive whiteboard and air conditioning to create a conducive learning environment.

Since they started, the safety classes have been attended by 92 children, including 55 girls and 37 boys. The sessions are held twice a month and cover topics of fire and mine safety.

Moreover, in response to the urgent need for improved sanitary and hygienic conditions in war-affected settlements of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, mobile collective washing stations have been established to serve both the civilian population and emergency services personnel. Each station includes one tent, containers for clean and dirty water, a 9 kW generator,



Safety Classroom in Ternivka, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.
Photo credit: Head Office of SES in Sumy Oblast; Ivan Lavrenko / UNDP in Ukraine

four LED lighting systems around the perimeter, and two motors for pumping water. Ventilation systems and a water heater are expected to be delivered.

Currently, the equipment designated for Luhansk Oblast is being used in other oblasts, and the SES units in these areas are aware of the availability of these facilities and can request support from the Luhansk SES.

The ongoing hostilities in Donetsk Oblast have also resulted in significant damage to the energy infrastructure. Consequently, diesel generators, maintained by SES personnel, have become a crucial alternative energy source for many settlements.

To facilitate a swift response to emergencies related to power outages, the Main Department of SES in Donetsk Oblast requested trailers to transport high-power generators to the areas where they are most needed, and which are maintained by the SES units. Eleven such trailers were procured by the Project and delivered to SES units in Avdiivka (1), Bakhmut (1), Druzhkivka (1), Kurakhove (2), Novoselivka (1), Selydove (2) and Sloviansk (1) in Donetsk Oblast, along with two trailers for units in Dnipro.³⁹ These trailers are anticipated to benefit the current population of Donetsk Oblast, and have already been used 57 times.

³⁹ Trailers for communities under the (temporary) military control of the Russian Federation or evacuation are located in: Bakhmut, Kurakhove and Selydove in Dnipro, Avdiivka in Dobropillia.

Not only the energy infrastructure but also the lives of rescuers are constantly at risk due to the nature of their duties. In Kharkiv Oblast, particularly in settlements near the frontline and those recently retaken by the Government of Ukraine, both rescuers and the infrastructure needed for their work face ongoing threats from shelling.

To mitigate these risks, support has been provided for eight SES units in Kharkiv Oblast, including concrete structures and materials to arrange shelters that will protect their personnel.

Shelters have been established in Kehychivka, Kolomak, Krasnopavlivka, Liubotyn, Sakhnovchshina and Zachepylivka communities, with one additional location currently being identified.

The exact number of first responders who benefit from shelters is not available, due to restricted information. As of 2024, SES comprises about 70,000 personnel. Every day, over 7,000 rescuers and around 2,200 units of equipment are on duty.⁴⁰

Due to its extended mandate the SES units are also engaged in preventing social tensions and mitigating the negative psychological effects of war. In particular, psychologists from SES units in Dnipro, Donetsk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts actively engage with affected communities, especially those near the front line. Their activities include counselling, individual and group consultations, as well as therapeutic interventions such as canine, sand, and art therapy.

However, due to the ongoing war, the SES units' psychological services in these oblasts lack sufficient transportation resources. This hinders their ability to respond effectively to calls and reach affected citizens, especially in remote settlements.

In response to this need, and to enhance the mobility of their psychologists, three minibuses have been delivered to SES units in Dnipro, Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. A fourth minibus is scheduled for delivery to the Kherson SES in October 2024. It is anticipated that approximately 10,000 individuals in the targeted oblasts will benefit from this initiative.

The ongoing war has significantly depleted many other aspects of the SES material resources, including the training centres that provided professional training for both emergency service rescuers and local fire brigade personnel. This degradation has severely affected capacity to conduct effective training for rescuers in the eastern oblasts of Ukraine, such as Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk and Mykolaiv. To address this critical gap, a concept note for creating an interregional training centre in Poltava was developed and approved by SES main office in Kyiv. The centre will serve rescuers from the SES and local fire brigades in areas where professional training is currently impossible.

According to the concept note, the interregional training centre will feature various facilities, including classes for psychological rehabilitation, virtual reality training for acquiring professional knowledge and skills, practical experience with emergency tools and equipment, basic first aid training, a co-working studio, and hostel accommodations.

To implement this initiative, the Main Department of SES in Poltava Oblast approached the Project for support. The Poltava Oblast State Administration is responsible for the refurbishment, while the Project has procured and delivered essential items, including furniture and household appliances. This initiative is ongoing.

Recognizing the importance of the role of other law-enforcement agencies in today's Ukraine the Project focused its attention on supporting the needs of the MIA in general and NPU in particular in the targeted oblasts.

In this regard, because of increased volume of international assistance received by government institutions, coordinated by the MIA, ongoing monitoring and analysis are needed to facilitate informed management decisions regarding its balanced distribution and effective use.

Under the Strategic Plan to Reform Law Enforcement Agencies within the Security and Defence Sector of Ukraine approved in 2023,⁴¹ the MIA was mandated to implement a digital solution for effective monitoring of international aid, including humanitarian, charitable, and technical assistance.

40 State Emergency Service of Ukraine (September 2024) Vid pochatku viyny zahynulo 97 ukrayins'kykh ryatuval'nykh, 395 poraneni — DSNS [Since the beginning of the war, 97 Ukrainian rescuers have died, 395 have been injured — State Emergency Service], at <http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/news.html?newsID=105283#:~:text=Щодня%20заступають%20на%20чергування%20понад%207000%20рятувальників%20>

41 Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2023) Pro Kompleksnyy stratehichnyy plan reformuvannya orhaniv pravoporyadku yak chastyny sektoru bezpeky i oborony Ukrainy na 2023-2027 roky [About the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Reform of Law Enforcement Bodies as Part of the Security and Defence Sector of Ukraine for 2023-2027], at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/273/2023#Text>.

Building on the successful experience of the NPU, which utilized software developed on the Microsoft Apps platform and Microsoft Power BI for analysis, the MIA decided to scale up this software to its other units. This software enables comprehensive tracking of international aid, including project counts, development partners, beneficiaries, and implementation status from initiation to completion.

The scaling up of this software across the MIA requires qualified IT specialists to implement necessary modifications and additional functionality. In response to a request from the MIA, the Project contracted a provider to develop software for monitoring and analysing international aid for all MIA bodies, including the NPU, SES, the National Guard and the Border Service.

Currently, two of the three contract outputs have been completed, with the final output – development of user instructions and training for MIA personnel – expected to be finalized in November 2024.

Furthermore, to support public safety and security in war-affected and hosting areas, enhanced personal and community security through effective coordination and dialogue between law enforcement bodies,

local authorities, and communities is essential. This approach requires strengthening of the capacities and practices of local justice institutions, and ensuring they are more accessible and responsive to the needs of various groups, particularly vulnerable populations such as survivors of SGBV.

Since 2017, NPU has been effectively working to prevent, respond to, and combat SGBV across Ukraine by the creation of special mobile police groups in cities with high population density. These groups comprise personnel from various police departments, including district officers, juvenile prevention specialists, and investigators (both women and men), who receive specialized training in SGBV prevention.

However, due to insufficient funding because of the military aggression against Ukraine and the loss of assets – including official vehicles – during the hostilities, these mobile police groups currently lack their own vehicles. This hampers their ability to respond quickly to SGBV incidents.

To address this urgent need to restore and strengthen the technical capacity of these mobile groups, and in response to a request from the NPU, five vehicles



New police station in Zamglai, Ripky community, Chernihiv Oblast, opened with Project support, October 2023.
Photo credit: Oleksandr Bohachenko / UNDP in Ukraine

have been procured, designated for SGBV mobile groups in target oblasts.⁴² The expected date of is October 2024.

To further support the NPU, between October 2023 and July 2024, 168 police officers (76 women) from the Main Departments of NPU preventive sectors in targeted oblasts took part in seven two-day training sessions on “Protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of persons with disabilities in police activity and the ethics of communication with them”.⁴³

The impact of these training sessions was significant; 95 percent of the participants, who initially lacked knowledge about the rights of persons with disabilities, confirmed in feedback forms that they successfully acquired the necessary information.

Moreover, to enhance the security of border communities in Chernihiv Oblast, the Project has facilitated the establishment of three new police stations.⁴⁴ Funding was allocated to procure essential building materials, furniture, and essential equipment. The village councils paid for repair work. In addition to establishing a much-needed physical police presence in these communities, this initiative is forging a robust bond of trust and collaboration between law enforcement and the local populace.

Overall, these concerted efforts have significantly improved the operational capabilities of law enforcement and emergency services across multiple regions of Ukraine. By improving law enforcement’s capacity to engage with vulnerable populations, these initiatives foster a more inclusive and effective policing approach amid the ongoing war, promoting greater sensitivity to community needs.

It is expected that these initiatives will also enhance public safety, promote community trust, and ensure more effective emergency responses.

Activity 2.1.2. Support to local authorities, SES and NPU for the provision of public information in support of public safety and security.

Given the protracted war in Ukraine, provision of public information regarding safety and security has be-

come critically important yet significantly challenged. Local authorities, the SES and the NPU, among others, face immense pressures due to the war, which has disrupted traditional communication channels and created heightened demand for accurate and timely information. In addition, the war has strained the resources and capacities of public institutions in Ukraine, limiting their ability to effectively disseminate information.

Therefore, the need for enhanced support in public information dissemination is urgent, as effective communication is essential to ensure public safety, foster community resilience, and build trust.

To address the above challenges the Project implemented several activities to bolster public safety and enhance communication efforts among SES and NPU units in target oblasts of Ukraine.

These activities included supporting the development of information products for public safety awareness and civil protection measures and strategies, and enhancing press and communication resources by procuring goods and conducting training.

When assisting in the development of information products, the Project supported, juvenile police officers who are actively engaged in educational initiatives in preschool and school settings, focusing on safety rules. These efforts are particularly vital due to frequent blackouts caused by shelling of Ukraine’s energy infrastructure. As part of these initiatives, officers emphasize the importance of reflective elements for pedestrians in the dark, as mandated by Ukrainian traffic regulations.

To effectively carry out their duties, juvenile prevention officers require reflective handouts to be distributed in schools. These materials serve as prizes in competitions and quizzes on traffic rules and safe behaviour, motivating children to learn and adhere to safety guidelines. However, the financial constraints of police budgets limit their ability to procure these materials.

In February 2024, the Project addressed this gap by providing sets of reflective assessories and children’s board games on traffic rules to juvenile police officers in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. Another aspect of juvenile police officers that was

42 Chernihiv, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy oblasts.

43 The training was organized for police officers from Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

44 New police stations have been established in three border communities in Chernihiv Oblast: the villages of Horobychi, Zamglai and Pakul.



EU4Recovery conducted a workshop for NPU spokespersons.
Photo credit: Serhii Minenko / UNDP in Ukraine

supported by the Project was aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of their preventive efforts in the summer months.

Thus, the NPU in Chernihiv and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts received printed materials to address various safety concerns for youth and children. The distributed materials included a variety of educational resources, such as flyers, signs, and posters focused on promoting safety and accident prevention.

While supporting NPU to address the needs to raise awareness and educate, the Project also responded to the requests from SES. In particular, SES units in Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy oblasts received the first set of essential equipment for press studios to enhance their capacity for effective communication and engage with the public during emergencies. The second set is expected to be provided by March 2025.

In addition, the external communication and media capabilities of both SES and NPU were enhanced during dedicated training sessions. Specifically, from 30 April to 1 May 2024, and on 16-17 May 2024, 39 commu-

nications specialists from SES and NPU (28 women) [took part](#) in these sessions, representing 10 oblasts⁴⁵ and the city of Kyiv, to improve their knowledge and skills in external communication and media engagement.

Based on feedback from the participants, additional training sessions were organized for spokespersons, focused on improving presentation skills, at the 1+1 Media School. Two sessions [took place](#) on 12-13 September and 25-26 September 2024, with a total of 40 participants (23 women) from the SES and NPU across the same oblasts.

Moreover, on 3 May in Kyiv, 16 May in Mykolaiv and 23 May in Dnipro, presentations of the White Book on Civil Protection in Ukraine were organized for SES units from all regions of Ukraine. The event was held in person, with online participation from SES units in the following oblasts: Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Poltava and Sumy. In addition to SES representatives, the event was attended by representatives of regional state (military) administrations, educational and methodological centres for civil protection and

45 Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia.

life safety, the Institute of Public Administration and Research on Civil Protection, and NGOs.

As part of this activity, 500 copies of the abovementioned White Paper were printed and distributed to the regional SES units across Ukraine.

The White Book on Civil Protection in Ukraine is an analytical report that provides a comprehensive overview of the civil protection system in Ukraine. It is designed to analyse the current state of civil protection, identify the main problems and challenges, and develop strategic directions for its future development.

These multifaceted efforts are expected to improve the capacity of law enforcement and emergency services to educate the public about safety and security issues. By providing juvenile police officers with the resources and training they need, as well as enhancing the communication capabilities of SES units, these initiatives are intended to foster a more informed and safer environment for children and communities. The distribution of educational materials and the development of effective communication strategies will not only empower officers but also build trust and cooperation between law enforcement and the public, ultimately contributing to greater overall resilience.

Activity 2.1.3. Strengthen the capacities of SES and NPU on crisis management, efficient coordination, human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, civil protection, first aid, conflict-sensitive and non-discriminatory communication, and social cohesion aspects.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has created significant challenges for the SES and NPU in managing inclusive crisis responses.

Coordinating emergency operations amid widespread destruction and displacement has proven difficult, particularly given the limited resources and infrastructure available.

This situation is exacerbated by the high demand for psychological support, as the SES currently employs 135 psychologists, each responsible for about 500 individuals. In addition to their roles providing emergency psychological assistance, SES psychologists

undertake various critical tasks, including professional selection for civil protection services and offering support during missions.

Since the onset of active hostilities, they have delivered emergency psychological assistance over 730 times, directly aiding more than 20,000 individuals in evacuation efforts.

Since February 2022, SES psychologists, in collaboration with mental health professionals from various organizations, have provided one-off psychological support to over 250,000 people. This support has reached victims of shelling, IDPs, children, and individuals with disabilities. Notably, in 2024 alone, 42,000 rescuers participated in emergency responses, and all received vital psychological support.⁴⁶

Recognizing these challenges, the Project provided comprehensive support to the NPU and the SES, focusing on enhancing community security and psychological support. Key initiatives included implementation of a Psychological Recovery Programme for SES psychologists, the establishment of psychological relief rooms across multiple oblasts, and the creation of coordination points for the NPU.

These activities are intended to improve mental health services and foster partnerships among local authorities, police, and emergency services.

The creation and implementation of the Psychological Recovery Programme is intended to standardize mental health support for SES psychologists, ensuring a cohesive approach to mental health services, complemented by the establishment of psychological relief rooms in Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. Additionally, activities such as art therapy sessions and professional burnout training for rescuers and their families further address the mental health challenges faced by first responders.

During the reporting period the training curriculum was developed based on the preliminary Psychological Recovery Programme, which is being piloted with the involvement of 50 psychologists from the SES Departments in 10 oblasts of Ukraine. On completion of the training sessions, based on feedback from training and supervisions, the programme will be revised and adopted for use within SES units throughout Ukraine.⁴⁷

46 Ukrinform Press Agency (October 2024) Dlya psykhologiv DSNS zapustyly prohramu supervizynoyi pidtrymky [Supervisory support programme launched for SES psychologists], at <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3879534-dla-psiologiv-dsns-zapustili-programu-supervizijnoidtrimki.html#:~:text=Проект%20реалізовуватиме%20ГО%20«Інститут%20психосоматики%20і%20травматерапії%22.%20Як>.

47 Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia.

The first two of four planned training sessions were conducted on 5-9 August and 16-20 September 2024 in Lviv, involving 41 participant (26 women). The remaining sessions are to be held by January 2025.

Furthermore, the initiative includes supervisory support to enhance the professional skills and competencies of psychologists, facilitating individual consultations, improving self-care practices, and addressing negative emotional states arising from their responsibilities. During the reporting period two online supervisory sessions for 30 participants (20 women) have taken place.

The initiative is expected to benefit approximately 20,500 rescuers, SES employees, and victims of hostilities in Ukraine.

The Psychological Recovery Programme developed within this Project can also be extended to other organizations and institutions in Ukraine that employ psychologists working in crisis situations with vulnerable populations, including military psychologists and personnel from various defence and security agencies.

In addition to the psychological initiatives, four grant projects are expected to establish psychological relief rooms in SES departments in Dnipropetrovsk (1,036 planned direct beneficiaries) and Poltava (539 planned direct beneficiaries) oblasts, as well as in the NPU department in Zaporizhzhia (93 planned direct beneficiaries). These projects will also include art therapy sessions, group psychological sessions, training for both rescuers and their family members, addressing the comprehensive needs of first responders and their communities.

Lastly, the Project supported the procurement of a pneumatic frame tent for the NPU in Luhansk Oblast. This tent facilitates coordination, psychological assistance, and the documentation of crimes in de-occupied areas, enabling immediate deployment of personnel and efficient reception of citizens in any location. The provision of such infrastructure is essential for ensuring timely responses to the needs of the community.

As a result of these activities, improvements in mental health support and community resilience are anticipated, significantly contributing to a more secure and supportive environment for first responders and the communities they serve.

OUTPUT 2.2

INCREASED CAPACITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS AND SECURITY SERVICE PROVIDERS TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY AND ADDRESS GBV/CRSV

Activity 2.2.1. Establish community security and social cohesion working groups (CSSCWGs) as open dialogue platforms and advisory bodies for the identification of needs, design and implementation of security initiatives, and early identification of community-level tensions.

The Project activities focus on improving community security in the target regions by utilizing a community mobilization approach. The methodology was developed by the United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme during its previous phase, and has been proven to foster synergies between local residents and authorities and enable them to respond effectively and in an inclusive and participatory manner to challenges to community security, and to enhance the community development process. The community

mobilization approach includes establishing dialogue platforms and formats such as CSSCWGs and advocacy groups, as well as other dialogue meetings.

CSSCWGs have been established to provide space for discussions, information sharing and raising security and development concerns among local authorities, security providers and communities at grassroots level. The CSSCWGs established in eastern Ukraine within the EU Support to the East of Ukraine project proved effective and sustainable at mobilizing community members to address the most pressing security issues in their settlements. Moreover, with the beginning of the large-scale war, the CSSCWGs have become an entry point for practical implementation of humanitarian-development nexus activities at local level, by mobilizing conflict-affected communities for action.

Implementing the Community Security and Social Cohesion approach to supporting recovery processes in the war-affected communities requires participatory action, local ownership and local capacity development from the first steps of implementation. To achieve this, partner civil society organizations (CSOs) have been selected and are operating in each target oblast – Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia – as well as Chernivtsi and Zakarpattia, supporting and developing the networks of CSSCWGs, CSRWs and IDP councils.

Currently, 63 CSSCWG CSRW and IDP council dialogue platforms have been established to support inclusive and participatory recovery processes in eight oblasts: Chernihiv (7), Chernivtsi (6), Dnipropetrovsk (7), Donetsk (14), Luhansk (7), Poltava (7), Zakarpattia (4) and Zaporizhzhia (11).⁴⁸ A network of the working groups in each oblast is operating as a community of practice to ensure local ownership and sustainability of the approach.

The CSSCWG Network in Chernihiv Oblast includes 160 regular participants (107 women) in seven communities – Chernihiv, Horodnia, Ivanivka, Mykhailo-Kotsiubynske, Nizhyn, Pryluky and Ripky. Over the reporting period 42 CSSCWG meetings were held, and 50 training and capacity building events were held on leadership, community profiling and development and other topics, bringing together 673 participants (630 women). As a result, 56 community-based initiatives were developed, of which 19 quick-impact projects were selected for further implementation, while three new NGOs were established in Ivanivka, Mykhailo-Kotsiubynske and Ripky communities. In addition, during the reporting period, five grant-funded projects were implemented: three to support activities and enhance the quality of life for target communities, and two focused on further developing the capacities of CSRWs and engaging youth in decision-making and recovery processes in partner communities.

Moreover, a Local Development Forum for Chernihiv Oblast [was held](#) from 31 October to 1 November 2023 in Chernihiv. The forum brought together over 120 participants (72 women), including local authorities, law enforcement agencies, entrepreneurs, the veteran community, and public sector representatives. The event featured three panel discussions addressing security challenges posed by the war, socio-economic development in Chernihiv Oblast, and the importance of active public involvement in reconstruction planning. Furthermore, the Chernihiv Regional Military

Administration presented a strategic document defining the recovery and development plan for Chernihiv Oblast.

The CSSCWG Network in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast includes 160 regular participants (112 women) in seven communities (Kamianske, Mykolaivka, Novomoskovsk, Pavlohrad, Sofiivka, Synelnykove and Ternivka). During the reporting period, 42 CSSCWG meetings were held, and 8 training and capacity-building events organized on community interaction psychology, inclusivity, youth engagement and project management, bringing together 156 participants (108 women). As a result, 63 community-based initiatives were developed, of which 16 quick-impact-projects were selected for further implementation. In addition, 14 grant-funded projects have been implemented and are planned for future implementation, focusing on community security, veterans' initiatives, and community policing.

To foster community engagement and support, on 18 January 2024, the "I de Ya" Centre for Business Activity and Public Initiatives was [inaugurated](#) in Pavlohrad, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. This initiative is intended to enhance communication between public activists and city authorities and facilitate the integration of IDPs into the community. Since its opening, 650 people (455 women) have benefited from the centre, and 26 events have been held. The centre offers co-working spaces, educational programme rooms, and meeting facilities, making it the only one of its kind in the region.

To discuss the outcomes of the CSSCWG Network activities in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast in 2023 and to set priorities for 2024, the Local Development Forum for Dnipropetrovsk Oblast took place on 13 December 2023 in Dnipro, with over 170 participants (113 women), including local authorities, law enforcement agencies, entrepreneurs, the veteran community, and representatives from the public sector. The forum included four panel discussions that focused on improving community security measures in host communities, transitioning from emergency response to long-term recovery and development, fostering new socio-economic opportunities, and facilitating the reintegration of veterans. A key focus was placed on involving displaced public organizations in the region's recovery and development efforts.

The CSSCWG Network in Donetsk Oblast includes 310 regular participants (215 women) in 14 commu-

48 Support to Chernivtsi and Zakarpattia networks is provided under Activity 2.3.1.



Participants at the Forum on Local Development in Zaporizhzhia, Zaporizhzhia, organized with support from the Project, 30 September 2024.
Photo credit: Serhii Kucherenko / UNDP in Ukraine

nities – Avdiivka, Dobropillia, Druzhkivka, Mariinka, Myrnohrad, Pokrovsk, Sartana, Siversk, Sloviansk, Soledar, Toretsk, Velyka Novosilka, Volnovakha, and Vuhledar.

Over the reporting period, 40 working group meetings were held involving 320 participants (227 women), and three training and capacity-building events were organized on effective advocacy and community development for 99 participants (73 women). As a result, 33 community-based initiatives were developed, of which 11-quick-impact projects were selected for further implementation as well as two grant-funded projects. In addition, one new NGO was established in Soledar community.

During the reporting period, working groups continued to support their communities, which are under the control of the Government of Ukraine. They also aided IDPs in host communities where they moved. Having gained significant experience, CSSCWGs are now sharing it in new communities and providing necessary interaction between IDPs and local authorities.

This in turn is helping to reduce tension between local populations and IDPs in host communities.

The CSSCWG Network in Luhansk Oblast includes 423 regular participants (278 women) representing seven communities – Kreminna, Lysychansk, Novoaidar, Nyzhnia Duvanka, Sievierodonetsk, Shchastia and Troitske.⁴⁹ Overall, during the reporting period, 30 working group meetings were held involving all regular participants, and 22 capacity-building events were organized for 182 participants (151 women) on project management, effective communications and negotiations and team building. As a result, 24 community-based initiatives were developed, of which 11 quick-impact projects were selected for further implementation.

In addition, on 17 August 2024, the CSSCWG Network in Luhansk Oblast held its network event in Rivne, where 22 representatives (20 women), shared their experiences of CSSCWG facilitation in host communities, discussed the challenges they faced, and the lessons learned. As a result, members of new com-

49 Relocated CSSCWGs from Luhansk Oblast work in the following communities: Kreminna in Rivne, Lysychansk in Dnipro and Kyiv, Novoaidar in Kropyvnytskyi and Uzhhorod, Nyzhnia Duvanka in Kharkiv, Sievierodonetsk in Dnipro, Shchastia in Lutsk, and Troitske in Poltava.

munities – Bilovodsk and Chmyriv – decided to form working groups in their communities. The network also successfully concluded planning activities for 2025.

Among other topics, the working group representatives discussed how to involve young people in Network activities, particularly by establishing youth spaces in humanitarian hubs and CSOs. These spaces could become centres of cohesion for IDPs in Luhansk Oblast. During the event successful examples already functioning in Rivne were also discussed.

The CSSCWG Network in Poltava Oblast includes 140 regular participants (97 women) from seven communities (Hradyzk, Kozelshchyna, Kremenichuk, Lubny, Myrhorod, Opishnia and Poltava). Six CSSCWG meetings have been held, during which the working group members discussed operational plans and priorities for 2024. Initiatives aimed at improving community security and enhancing social cohesion were selected for implementation. During the reporting period, the CSSCWG in Poltava Oblast held 12 training and capacity-building events on effective advocacy, communication and community development for 218 participants (162 women). As a result, over 37 community-based initiatives were developed, of which 12 quick-impact projects were selected for further implementation. Additionally, over 10 grant applications were developed, of which 8 received financing. All the projects are intended to create safe spaces that offer various services for people affected by the war, IDPs, and other vulnerable groups. Additionally, they seek to enhance security through either police training or by providing police with necessary technical assistance.

One notable project, “Professional development of trauma therapists”, was implemented with the participation of psychologists from eight oblasts of Ukraine.⁵⁰ As a result of this project, the level of psychological support in the community has significantly increased. This improvement is attributed to the training of trauma psychologists using the Murray method, along with post-training support provided to individual psychologists to enhance the quality of their counselling services. This outcome is vital for all community members, particularly for survivors of traumatic events. A total of 87 psychologists, including 81 women, directly benefited from the training.

The CSSCWG Network in Zaporizhzhia Oblast includes 180 regular participants (100 women) in 10 communities – Zaporizhzhia, Berdiansk, Kyrylivka, Melito-

pol, Osypenko, Pryazovske, Prymorsk, Semenivka, Shyrokye, Yakymivka and Zaporizhzhia regional CSSCWGs. During the reporting year, 77 working group meetings were held, and 71 members of the CSSCWG network (51 women) attended three training events on project management and capacity building. As a result, 12 community-based initiatives were developed and approved.

On 27 September 2024, the Zaporizhzhia Regional Forum on Local Development, entitled Community Security and Recovery, [was held](#) in Zaporizhzhia, attracting over 100 participants, including 46 women. The forum was held to share best practices in community recovery and discuss strategic cooperation on safety and social development during wartime, emphasizing collaboration among various stakeholders such as the police, emergency services, businesses, and civil society to enhance safety and foster long-term partnerships.

The final resolution acknowledged the essential role of working groups in both displaced and host communities in supporting IDPs amid the ongoing hostilities, as well as the necessity of replicating these successful practices in other communities across the oblast.

In line with these discussions and the commitment to community recovery, a grant-funded project to support activities and quality of life for communities in Zaporizhzhia’s Youth HUB People.ua was successfully [implemented](#). The youth centre will serve as a space for the development of displaced youth in Zaporizhzhia, encouraging their active participation in the recovery of war-affected communities. Additionally, the centre will involve young people in civic volunteer initiatives, and host thematic events to enhance community security and social cohesion, including educational training and seminars.

The grant for the “Development of the network of community security and recovery working groups in 10 territorial communities of Zaporizhzhia Oblast” is under implementation.

Recognizing the importance of enhanced **cooperation between communities and first responders** within the “Strengthening community security through the interaction of communities and SES” grant contest, three projects were supported in Myrnohrad (Donetsk Oblast), Samar (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast) and Pryluky (Chernihiv Oblast). The activities included training and capacity-building initiatives designed to enhance

50 Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.



Youth centre for displaced young men and women opens in Zaporizhzhia thanks to EU4Recovery.
Photo credit: Oleksii Kovalov / UNDP in Ukraine

community safety and emergency response capabilities. Participants received training from SES and were equipped to work within a volunteer fire brigade. Community members engaged in various activities that expanded their knowledge in security-related areas. This included first aid and mine safety training, as well as informational events where residents learned about emergency services and security practices. The expected number of beneficiaries is 4,398 persons.

To further enhance the capacity of target community representatives to use innovative tools to engage residents in recovery processes and decision-making, a training session for facilitators of the Communities in Safety educational board game was held on 18-19 June 2024. In total 53 participants (41 women) from Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk, Poltava, and Zakarpattia oblasts took part in the activities and gained knowledge on the use and development of educational games for engaging community residents, the police, the SES and authorities in recovery and development processes.

Moreover to enhance the capacity of community residents to engage in economic and infrastructure recovery initiatives, the RE-SAFE: Breathing Life into

Communities Ideathon [was held](#) on 23-24 April 2024, in Lviv. The event brought together 72 representatives (66 women) from communities in Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk and Poltava oblasts. As a result of the Ideathon, participants secured funding to implement 11 grant projects planned for the second half of 2024. These projects are focused on improving community safety and contributing to reconstruction efforts by fostering sustainable, strong, and productive partnerships.

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of community security, social cohesion, and recovery needs in selected oblasts of Ukraine, the research was implemented by the Centre for Educational Initiatives, which is providing support and general management across 36 partner hromadas in Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Zakarpattia oblasts. The research will focus on profiling these 36 partner hromadas to understand their specific contexts and needs. Additionally, it will analyse the activities of CSOs before and after the full-scale invasion and gather information on the current needs of the communities. The expected results include comprehensive community profiles that provide insights into the unique strengths and challenges of each community.

During the reporting period, the Project continued its support for **veterans and their families**. Specifically, six projects aimed at providing psychological support to veterans and their families were implemented in the communities of Chernihiv, Kherson, Poltava, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. These projects focus on strengthening capacity to deliver psychological and social rehabilitation services for veterans, organizing “Equal to Equal” mutual assistance groups for women veterans, as well as the wives and mothers of fallen defenders. Additionally, they involve the development of innovative and accessible services based on Veteran Hubs. The planned number of direct beneficiaries is 1,140 individuals.

Additionally, the Project supported three quick-impact projects for veterans in Novomoskovsk veteran’s space, Pavlohrad Lyceum #5, and Synelnykove Centre for Social Services, procuring office and computer equipment, furniture and building materials.

In August 2024, the Project supported a network event for Local and Regional Agencies for Development that was held in Kyiv. The event was intended to facilitate exchange of experiences, foster networking, and develop a shared vision regarding the role of agencies in the broader context of Ukraine’s recovery. A total of 72 participants attended, including 37 participants (28 women) from Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, and Zakarpattia CSSCWGs, representatives from target communities, regional and local government officials, and a representative from the Ministry for Communities and Territories Development.

Twenty projects are underway to strengthen community security and social cohesion in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Poltava and Chernihiv oblasts. The projects cover the following activities: establishing centres to involve the community in musical, educational, social, creative programmes; supporting adaptation and integration of IDPs into their host community, including the elderly, youth, veterans, and so on; and work to prevent violence among schoolchildren by using an interactive game in educational institutions, among others.

Most of the projects are ongoing. The completed projects include: creation of the “I de Ya” centre for business activity and public initiatives in Pavlohrad (Dnipropetrovsk oblast), the Professional Development of Trauma Therapists project in Poltava Oblast, establish-

ment of the People.ua centre for young people from the occupied territories in the city of Zaporizhzhia, and installation of pedestrian crossing road signs with additional LED lighting, speed control panels and backup power equipment on a road of national importance in Pavlohrad (Dnipropetrovsk oblast).

Furthermore, procurement of furniture and equipment is ongoing to support the establishment of seven of community security and social cohesion resource centres for Chernihiv (1), Donetsk (1), Luhansk (2), and Poltava (3) oblasts. The centres, which are initiatives of the CSSCWGs, will primarily serve the interests of their respective communities. They will act as platforms for coordinating security service providers with the communities and for hosting joint events. It is anticipated that all the centres will become operational by March 2025.

Activity 2.2.2. Support the prevention and redressal of GBV, including CRSV, through increased public awareness, establishment, or refurbishment of GBV shelters and day centres, and strengthened provision of psycho-social, legal and emergency medical services for survivors.

Russia’s full-scale military invasion has created significant challenges for the population in Ukraine, especially for the most vulnerable groups, leaving them without adequate support and resources. GBV, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), remains one of the critical issues to address.

According to the Head of the NPU, in 2023 alone, nearly 244,000 reports and statements were received, from citizens regarding domestic violence, making it the most common form of GBV in Ukraine. Of these, 76.5 percent were from women, over 20 percent from men, and more than 3 percent of the total were from children.⁵¹

To respond to the challenges, the Project is focusing on enhancing the capacity of law-enforcement professionals to prevent and address GBV through comprehensive training sessions, community awareness campaigns, and assisting the establishment of dedicated support units, in order to create a safer environment for survivors and promote effective intervention strategies.

51 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2023) V Natpolitsiyi pratsyuyut’ 54 spetsializovani pidrozdily protydyi domashn’omu nasyt’stvu [The National Police has 54 specialized units for combating domestic violence], at <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/v-natpolitsii-pratsiuiut-54-spetsializovani-pidrozdily-protydyi-domashnomu-nasytstvu>.

During November-December 2023, as part of the **16 Days Against Violence campaign**, GBV prevention events were conducted across seven target communities in **Chernihiv Oblast**.⁵² These initiatives were intended to enhance the capacity of local law-enforcement professionals to understand, identify, and respond to cases of GBV, with a particular focus on domestic violence exacerbated by the ongoing war.

Seven workshops entitled Peculiarities of Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence Cases under Martial Law were held, engaging 150 representatives (128 women) from local government, civil society, educational institutions, and social services in Chernihiv Oblast. Participants raised awareness of GBV issues and developed practical skills for responding effectively to such cases, collaboratively establishing a clear algorithm for action in situations of domestic violence.

In addition to the workshops, a **social interactive theatre performance** was organized in **Chernihiv Oblast**, targeting adolescents and young people on GBV issues, with an audience of up to 80 individuals in each community. Overall, these activities successfully reached approximately 1,000 participants (85 percent women) throughout the region.

In **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**, similar workshops were organized across 10 communities,⁵³ intended to develop adequate response skills, establish clear action algorithms for domestic violence situations. In total the campaign and the workshops reached 500 participants (327 women).

To further support awareness efforts, visibility items such as bags, flashlights, and bracelets were procured for the Patrol Police in Kremenchuk (Poltava Oblast) and utilized in the campaign to promote the message of the 16 Days Against Violence campaign.

In the reporting period, a series of comprehensive training initiatives were conducted to strengthen the capacity of professionals addressing GBV across various regions in Ukraine.

From 23-24 May 2024 in Dnipro a training session entitled **Preventing and Counteracting Domestic and GBV at Community Level** was held for 30 participants (26 women) from social protection and social services institutions, psychologists and the NPU in Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. This training was in-

tended to enhance community professionals' ability to identify, prevent and respond effectively to cases of GBV under martial law.

Following this, on 11-12 July 2024 **training on GBV Prevention and Offender Management** took place in Chernihiv Oblast, engaging approximately 20 local social workers, police officers, and psychologists (17 women). As a result, 88 percent of participants improved their knowledge and engaged in discussions on government programmes for offenders. The need for further, more advanced training on certification when working with programmes, as well as with legal issues related to implementation at community level was emphasized by participants.

From 14-16 August 2024 in Dnipro, a training event on **Prevention and Response to GBV Including Domestic Violence at the Community Level** was conducted for 36 representatives (24 women) from the NPU and specialized institutions, including support centres for survivors of domestic violence and GBV, in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Mykolaiv oblasts. The training provided insights into the psychological aspects of domestic violence in the context of martial law, focusing on the profiles of perpetrators and effective support for survivors. It highlighted risks associated with domestic violence in this period, emphasized the importance of victim assistance strategies, and reviewed state programmes for offenders. Additionally, participants developed communication approaches with offenders, taking into account wartime trauma and established protocols for addressing child abuse cases.

During 29-30 August 2024, training for social service workers was held in Mukachevo, (Zakarpattia Oblast), attended by 26 women. The training event focused on strengthening social service professionals' ability to prevent and respond to GBV and work with perpetrators, emphasizing legal aspects, interaction with the NPU, and providing psychological assistance.

Finally on 18-20 September 2024, a training session entitled **Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence under Martial Law** was held for 30 participants (18 women) from the NPU in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. This training was intended to strengthen the coordination system and cooperation between law enforcement agencies and support services for survivors of domestic violence, while enhancing NPU staff capacity to identify, prevent, and respond effectively to cases of domestic violence under martial law. Participants

52 Chernihiv, Horodnia, Ivanivka, Mykhailo-Kotsiubynske, Nizhyn, Pryluky and Ripky.

53 Berdiansk, Kyrylivka, Melitopol, Osypenko, Pryazovske, Prymorsk, Semenivka, Shyrokye, Yakymivka and Zaporizhzhia.

practiced interaction skills to ensure comprehensive protection for survivors and accountability for perpetrators, with a focus on preventing further offences through judicial deterrence policies and penalties.

In addition to the training initiatives, the ongoing implementation of grant projects further enhances community safety and resilience. These projects, which include educational sessions and the establishment of safe spaces, complement the training efforts by equipping local law enforcement and community members with the skills and resources they need to address domestic violence and promote safety effectively.

Two grant-funded projects, entitled Creating Green Rooms and a Safety Class, are currently underway in Chernihiv (two “green rooms” and one safety classroom) and Dnipropetrovsk (three “green rooms” and one safety classroom) oblasts. These projects include repair work, equipping the premises, and educational sessions for police officers on applying the “green room” methodology. Additionally, educational initiatives will target various age groups of girls and boys regarding mine safety, first aid and fire safety.

It is anticipated that at least 200 children will participate in the educational sessions conducted by the SES, and 50 police officers from each oblast will undergo training on the ‘green room’ methodology.

Furthermore, eight grant projects, supported through the Strengthening Community Security and Community Policing in Target Communities grant contest are ongoing. These projects aim involve educational sessions addressing violence, to improve the safety of women and youth, engage women in develop local action plans on security issues, and create a network of safe spaces for social assistance for IDPs, veterans, and their families. The projects are being carried out in Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, with one project implemented by a relocated CSO from Luhansk Oblast. The planned number of direct beneficiaries is 3,952 individuals.

To support activities aimed at capacity building and equipping the newly established police domestic violence response units in target communities in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast (Dnipro, Novomoskovsk, and Synelnykove) the Project procured furniture and computer equipment; by November 2024 the delivery of three vehicles for domestic violence response units in Chernihiv, Dnipro and Sumy oblasts is expected.

Activity 2.2.3. Support the introduction and expansion of gender- and disability-responsive community policing principles and establishment and operationalization of local Safety and Security Centres.

Under this Activity, the Project was intended to support the introduction and expansion of gender- and disability-responsive community policing principles. One major challenge identified was the insufficient involvement of young people in decision-making processes and local recovery efforts, particularly in conflict-affected regions. Additionally, there was a lack of opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills needed for meaningful contributions to community security and recovery initiatives. Limited cooperation between youth and local security structures further hindered effective engagement in community safety efforts. Fragmented support networks for young leaders across various regions also reduced collaborative opportunities for driving local change and enhancing community resilience.

From June to August 2024, four School of Safety Environment training events were [conducted](#) for representatives of the NPU, the SES, municipalities, and NGOs in target communities across Chernihiv, Dnipro, Kherson, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts for 99 participants (60 women).

These training events served as an enhanced follow-up to sessions in 2023 on community policing and project proposal development for local safety initiatives. The programme was intended to broaden participants’ understanding of safety concepts, covering various dimensions such as public safety, civil protection, ecological and economic safety, and social care. It also addressed the concept of resilience and the critical roles of good governance and civil society, protection of essential community entities, inter-community cooperation, and community engagement in safety initiatives.

Three projects were supported in the areas of community security and youth engagement. The first, **NewGENeration**, focused on GBV prevention for youth in Dnipro, benefiting 28 direct participants (20 women). The second project, **Forum for Luhansk Youth: Youth. Transformation.** Movement, served as a dialogue-building platform for internally displaced youth councils from Luhansk Oblast and local authorities, along with organizations such as the police and SES. This project reached 34 direct beneficiaries (21 women).

Both projects have successfully concluded. The third project, addressing bullying prevention for youth in schools in Uzhhorod, is currently being implemented for an expected 50 beneficiaries.

To enhance community security in the target areas and provide community police officers and firefighters with appropriate working conditions, furniture and equipment for police stations are currently being procured, for one police station in Chernihiv Oblast (Ripky), two in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast (Sofiivka and Kamianske), and three in Poltava Oblast (Lubny, Kozelshchyna and Hradyzk). Additionally, procurement is in progress for furniture, equipment, and construction materials for the firefighting brigade in Ripky, Chernihiv Oblast.

A total of 99 representatives from 37 communities participated in training events where they engaged in discussions about the concepts of security environment and resilience. Participants explored various dimensions and levels of these concepts, gaining valuable insights into the national critical infrastructure protection system and the roles of various stakeholders. They identified protection requirements that extend beyond critical infrastructure, enhancing their understanding of how to strengthen the overall security environment in their communities.

The training also emphasized practical skills development, enabling participants to assess community security risks using internationally recognized methodologies based on real data. They learned effective practices for engaging local populations in security environment development, fostering collaboration with various partners, and exploring innovative fundraising initiatives.

Additionally, the training programme addressed sources of social tensions and strategies for overcoming them, highlighting social cohesion as vital to resilience. Participants modelled campaigns to engage their communities in security initiatives, and created actionable plans for safer environments, strengthening relationships among community leaders, public sector representatives, and emergency response services in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, thus laying the foundation for future collaboration.

To enhance the capabilities of local fire brigades (LFBs) in Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv oblasts for responding to emergency situations, sets of firefighter

protective clothing – including boots, helmets, gloves, and fire rescue belts – [were procured](#) and distributed.⁵⁴ Further support will also be extended to the LFB, with additional firefighting equipment to bolster their emergency response capabilities.

Activity 2.2.4. Research activities aiming to gain better understanding of displaced women's and men's different needs and challenges, intergroup relations, and power dynamics with host communities and general community perceptions, including through SCORE IDPs booster, piloting of a tension monitoring system and others.

To identify the major strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of social cohesion in the specific context of Ukraine and in order to respond to the rapidly changing environment because of war, the Project is supporting the deployment and implementation of Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE 2024), a joint initiative of the USAID-funded Democratic Governance East (DG East) and USAID's Transformation Communications Activity, the UNDP, implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (SeeD).

Following the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in February 2022, the SCORE 2024 partnership and SCORE research framework have focused on helping to build a roadmap for recovery and reconstruction with a three-legged resilience lens: resilient governance and institutions, resilient livelihoods, and resilient citizenship, where social cohesion and needs assessment are mainstreamed across all three legs.

The SCORE methodology has been tried and tested successfully in Ukraine over multiple iterations, which allows for robust temporal analysis and comparison to unpack changing trends and tendencies, as well as monitoring impact of interventions. Implementation of the SCORE methodology provides strategic evidence and informs UNDP activity design, monitoring, and evaluation processes.

Within the partnership agreement, the Project is conducting additional 1,300 interviews with specific demographic, social, and geographical groups (youth, veterans and an additional booster for Mykolaiv oblast) as a part of the SCORE 2024 research project.

⁵⁴ Dnipropetrovsk Oblast: Bohdaniivska community (5 sets), Mezhyritska community (4 sets), Troitska community (5 sets), Verbkivska community (16 sets). And Kharkiv Oblast: Bohodukhivska community (4 sets).

The main SCORE sample, which is covered by the DG East, comprises 8,925 interviews in territories under the control of the Government of Ukraine, which will provide data at national and oblast levels. The results of the interviews are expected by November 2024.

In addition, procurement of three analytical SCORE briefs – with a particular focus on specific demographic, social, and geographical groups (veterans, youth and citizens of Mykolaiv Oblast) – is underway.

The assessment of needs and capacities among CSOs, with a specific focus on youth, community security, and veterans' organizations, has become increasingly vital in the context of the full-scale invasion. Before the war, numerous research initiatives regularly explored these topics. However, the invasion has had a profound impact on both the number and capacity of CSOs, as well as the nature of their activities. This situation has created an urgent need for up-to-date information on the needs, capacities, and future prospects of these organizations. While various research efforts are underway to address this gap, many primarily focus on general trends rather than offering in-depth insights into specific contexts.

To respond to this need, the Project staff intend to conduct a comprehensive assessment of CSOs in targeted communities across Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy, Zakarpattia and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. During the reporting period, terms of reference were developed to cover 52 communities within these 10 oblasts, including CSO mapping through screening and an online survey. To enrich the assessment, 40 in-depth interviews and four focus group discussions will be conducted with key informants from partner rural and urban communities.

Preparatory steps have included the selection and contracting of the Sociologist research bureau, along with the establishment of a work plan, report content, preliminary assessment methodology, screening procedures, and guides for in-depth interviews and focus groups. These measures are designed to ensure a thorough and comprehensive evaluation of the CSOs' capacities and needs.

Activity 2.2.5. Capacity building of community analysts to support the expansion of the Geoinformation system for conflict analysis and support to development of network of community mediators to support conflict resolution.

During the reporting period the Project focused on implementation of a grant-funded project to support the Geoinformation System for Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation, and Conflict Resolution (GISMAERC), which marks a significant advancement in the ongoing partnership with the Centre for Law and Mediation NGO. This project builds on previous collaborative efforts and is intended to enhance the GISMAERC's framework sustainability and efficiency.

To achieve these goals the Project integrated the activities of GISMAERC with those of the Working Groups on Community Security and Social Cohesion/Recovery. This strategic consolidation leverages the participatory nature of the Working Groups, enabling diverse community voices to be heard. By actively involving individuals with decision-making authority, we aim to expedite the conflict resolution process in the targeted communities.

The GISMAERC project is being implemented across several key regions, including Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, Kherson and Chernihiv oblasts. Through this initiative, it is expected to develop actionable recommendations for local self-government bodies and central state authorities, focusing on emerging conflict trends and effective resolution strategies.

The project anticipates directly benefiting approximately 2,100 individuals, fostering a more resilient and cohesive community environment, and conclusion by December 2024.

Building on the community-focused approach established by the GISMAERC project, the Comprehensive Online Service of Providing Support in the Field of Mental Health (psychological support hotline of the National Psychological Association⁵⁵) project further addresses the needs of individuals affected by conflict by providing accessible psychological assistance. This represents a natural progression from activities initiated in 2022 in response to urgent needs. In 2023, the project has shifted focus from primary psychological support to more sustainable mental health solutions.

⁵⁵ Detailed information is provided under Activity 2.5.3.

Activity 2.2.6. Community-based prevention of GBV against women and girls by supporting “attitudinal change” to encourage non-violent masculinities, challenge existing gender norms, and raise awareness regarding the unacceptability of GBV against women and girls, engaging men in prevention and protection efforts, and establishing safe spaces and community-based protection mechanisms.

The impact of the war in Ukraine continues to be felt across the country. Over 14.6 million people require humanitarian assistance, including 2.5 million people in need of GBV assistance.⁵⁶ GBV was a risk facing women and girls in Ukraine before the escalation of the conflict in 2022; a 2019 study found that 67 percent of women surveyed reported they had experienced physical, psychological, or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner since the age of 15.⁵⁷ Nearly 30 percent of women surveyed experi-

enced sexual and physical violence from an intimate partner, and a further 24 percent of women reported experiencing non-partner physical or sexual violence.⁵⁸ In Ukraine, patriarchal social norms are often reinforced by gender stereotypes and beliefs regarding traditional gender roles and have been impacted by the conflict.

During the reporting period the Project contributed to the improvement of community-based structures, capacity systems, and safety nets for preventing and responding to GBV, violence against women and girls (VAWG) and CRSV in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Poltava Oblasts. As a result of these activities, awareness and knowledge of GBV prevention and response have significantly increased among 2,815,321 individuals (1,953,875 women). This progress was achieved through a range of innovative initiatives, which included awareness-raising sessions on critical topics, the formation of support groups, and the implementation of information campaigns.



Internews Ukraine round table dialogue on GBV prevention and response
Photo credit: Valeriia Shvachko, NGO “Internews Ukraine”

56 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2023) Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 (December 2023) [EN/UK], at <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2024-december-2023-enuk>.

57 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (2019) Survey on Violence against Women: Ukraine, at https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/1/3/440312_0.pdf.

58 Ibid.



Training on Violence Prevention and Equality is our Common Goal, Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, 17 March 2024.
Photo credit: Yegor Antonov

To **enhance awareness and response** to GBV, key activities included awareness-raising sessions on critical topics, forming 12 support groups across various communities, and executing 50 information campaigns.

Training and capacity building initiatives included 15 training and information sessions with 42 interagency actors, including CSOs, police, health workers, legal aid service providers, academia and volunteers. These sessions are intended to bridge knowledge gaps between duty bearers and rights holders, ensure a coordinated approach to GBV prevention and enhance their understanding of legal frameworks concerning GBV and women's rights. Other topics included knowledge enhancement and awareness of women's rights, types, and manifestations of GBV/CRSV services and prevention mechanisms, including referrals for GBV services.

Community engagement and dialogue were enhanced for over 8,576 individuals (6,418 women and girls, 2,158 men and boys) during 6 roundtable dialogues held offline in Dnipro, Donetsk, and Poltava oblasts. These sessions provided a platform for sharing personal experiences and instances of GBV within communities, leading to a positive shift in at-

titudes towards domestic violence. As a result, more individuals began recognizing it as a crime rather than a private matter. Also, many women and girls have initiated projects to educate perpetrators about the unacceptability of their actions. To support these efforts, the Project trained 110 women activists, promoting the formation of women's support groups dedicated to referring GBV cases and conducting awareness-raising activities.

To foster **activism and leadership** in target communities, the Project established 12 community women's support groups, comprising 110 trained activists – five in Dnipropetrovsk, five in Poltava and two in Donetsk oblasts. These groups have reached 858 women actively participating in community forums to create safe environments for women and girls. In addition, the Project saw increased participation of women and girls in the community recovery and security platforms activities. Furthermore, five gender forums were held, engaging over 5,563 women and girls to discuss GBV, women's leadership, and human rights.

Key results on **male engagement and positive masculinity** include 100 individuals trained as gender equality champions, as well as establishment of three men's

networks on Telegram.⁵⁹ As one of the outcomes, young male champions launched the Power of Love campaign to enhance positive interaction and communication to prevent intimate partner violence and domestic violence, reaching 337 students in Pokrovsk community (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast). Additionally, 265 community members (171 women), along with 14 CSOs, have conducted GBV prevention initiatives in communities through peer-to-peer dialogues. The Project also supported and implemented three quick-impact projects from men and boys on gender equality and GBV prevention, that reached over 345 beneficiaries.

Within the **media and outreach activities** the Project collaborated with 10 regional online media platforms to disseminate messages on VAWG/GBV prevention and promote gender equality. Media campaigns targeted a male audience, aiming to raise awareness, provide information on support services, and advocate positive social norms. Ten articles were published, achieving 8,943 views, and the outreach included 210 promotional posts that engaged 28,126 individuals through likes, comments, and shares. Additionally, two videos were produced on preventing violence against women and girls.

OUTPUT 2.3

LOCAL AUTHORITIES, PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY ARE FURTHER CAPACITATED TO ENGAGE IN AND PROMOTE IDP INCLUSION EFFORTS

Activity 2.3.1. Support to community-led initiatives, inclusion activities, including CSO-organized civic initiatives, cultural events, dialogue forums, youth-led volunteering activities, youth journalism/storytelling and social cohesion events.

The ongoing war has profoundly affected Ukraine, with regions on or near the frontline experiencing significant effects from military operations, including internal and international displacement. In addition to displacement, these areas face pressing humanitarian and development challenges, such as housing shortages, economic strain, and limited access to essential services. Support for communities in these regions is crucial – not only for physical reconstruction but also to restore normality and economic opportunities.

In this context, addressing community security and safety can positively influence public health, well-being, environmental safety and resilience. This holistic approach supports individuals and communities to achieve freedom from fear and want.

The implemented activities addressed several key issues, such as the limited involvement of young people in decision making and local recovery efforts in conflict-affected areas. Opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills for meaningful participation in community security and recovery were also lacking. Additionally, there was minimal cooperation between

youth and local security structures, which impeded effective engagement, and fragmented support networks for young leaders limited collaborative efforts for local change.

In times of conflict, it is essential for young people to understand local governance and identify channels for civic involvement. However, cooperation has been limited, as youth often blame authorities for community issues, while authorities may not fully recognize youth as equal partners. As future leaders, young people need to grasp the governance structures that underpin stability and resilience.

Today, a trend towards societal cohesion is emerging, as individuals increasingly see it as their duty to address not only personal needs but also community and national issues. **Social entrepreneurship** has thus become a global necessity, rather than just a trend or corporate responsibility.

Therefore, it is essential to equip NGOs with the tools they need to incorporate business elements into their work and guide new entrepreneurs in integrating social components into their business models. This approach enhances both the socio-economic success of organizations and their capacity to address urgent social needs. However, without a clear understanding of social entrepreneurship, NGOs, and small and medium enterprises may struggle to achieve synergy between economic efficiency and social impact. De-

59 Dnipropetrovsk oblast: https://t.me/+_kXF4frhUrIjZWNI; Donetsk oblast: https://t.me/+SeLUqg_DiYxiZTgy; Poltava oblast: <https://t.me/+lYyWTcl-LWZhN2Fj>.

veloping social entrepreneurship in Ukraine is particularly relevant now, given the economic and social challenges that are accompanying efforts to reintegrate newly liberated territories.

In order to successfully implement this activity, the Project is supporting the following community-led initiatives:

The **Impactpreneurship 2.0** social entrepreneurship course, on the [FUNdraiser platform](#), is intended to foster the establishment of new social enterprises in Ukraine, aiding the reintegration and socialization of veterans and IDPs, and engaging active youth in the country's recovery. By promoting business practices aligned with international standards, the course enhances the capacity of NGOs and small to medium-sized enterprises, while imparting valuable knowledge in strategic and crisis management. Through this course and associated project activities, participants acquire in-depth knowledge and skills in social entrepreneurship, supported by expert mentors.

Over 780 participants – including 261 IDPs, 28 veterans and 183 young entrepreneurs – from across Ukraine,

including 12 targeted oblasts (Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy, Zakarpattia and Zaporizhzhia), engaged in a three-month course to transform their ideas into impactful social projects. These participants formed 109 teams, of which 15 were selected to present their projects to a jury at the Kyiv City Administration on September 5, 2024. Following the presentations, the jury awarded seed funding to 11 projects, totalling approximately \$140,000. The winning teams will receive grants to implement their initiatives and benefit from three months of post-course mentorship to further support their projects.

During the reporting period **Community Resilience Centres (CRCs)** have continued to develop to become flexible hubs offering a variety of services to address the specific needs of local communities, focusing on youth, families, women and vulnerable groups.

The [opening](#) of the “Place of Strength” **CRC** took place on 30 August 2024, in Nizhyn, Chernihiv Oblast, with the Project support. This adaptive and inclusive space is designed to foster community cohesion, strengthen social capital, and support recovery and development. The centre serves as a hub for seminars and



The opening of the Place of Strength centre in Nizhyn, Chernihiv Oblast. Photo credit: Oleksandr Bohachenko / UNDP in Ukraine

training sessions, focused particularly on enhancing mental health and resilience among youth and families affected by the war. These activities are intended to support those who have experienced separation, loss, or forced displacement, helping them adapt to new circumstances and rebuild their lives. The centre operates from the Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University, providing a stable and supportive environment that allows for its sustained work and contribution to the community.

Additionally, the centre facilitates initiatives to increase community security and promote environmental awareness. It offers youth programmes that address healthy relationships, leadership, and integration, while day camps provide a safe space for processing war-related trauma and developing essential life skills. The total cost of the initiative was over \$125,000, with UNDP contributing technical equipment and resources for youth security and environmental safety, and UNFPA supporting thematic training on resilience, healthy relationships and youth leadership.

Another example of effective inter-agency cooperation, the CRC, implemented by the Living Heart Charitable Foundation [was opened](#) in April 2024 in Kamianske, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, through the joint efforts of UNDP and UNFPA.

The newly established Centre in Kamianske provides mental health support and resilience training for youth, families in difficult circumstances, women, and other vulnerable groups. It was established to foster youth potential and enhance community security, with a focus on preventing GBV. Through collaboration with local authorities, organizations and the community, tailored training programmes address specific challenges, including those caused by the war. These programmes cover community and environmental security, healthy relationships, GBV prevention, and mental health support. Even before it was completed, the Centre had held over 80 events, engaging more than 1,600 residents. The project budget was \$165,800, which also included financing from the local authorities. Furthermore, an agreement was reached with Kamianske City Council to allocate resources from the municipal budget to sustain the Centre's staff after the current project funding concludes.

In turn Kremenchuk CRC's official opening is scheduled for October 2024. It is expected that the Centre will provide community support and training, enhancing collaboration with local authorities and organizations. Similarly, Kremenchuk city authorities have committed to covering the operational expenses related

to maintaining the premises when the Centre's activities are conducted, ensuring sustainability.

Throughout the reporting period, CRCs organized and participated in numerous **community-based events**, further solidifying their presence and impact within their respective communities. These events included volunteer forums, resilience training, art therapy sessions and sports competitions.

Each event was designed to engage diverse segments of the community, promote social cohesion, and foster a supportive environment for youth and families. The most notable events held in the Centres in Kamianske, Kremenchuk and Nizhyn include 15 art therapy workshops attended by 179 individuals (142 women), 5 digital security events attended by 51 people (44 women), and 3 family play therapy sessions attended by 27 individuals (13 women). To equip residents of the target oblasts with tools for continuous improvement and resilience in various life circumstances the Resilience 2.0 Programme was implemented with 49 events, attended by 817 individuals (551 women).

CRCs have also consistently worked to build and strengthen partnerships with local authorities, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders in the target communities. They also expanded the reach of their activities beyond their immediate communities by participating in the **International Youth Day event**, held on 6-8 September 2024 in Lviv, organized by partner organization Molodvizh. At this event, the Centres team presented their initiative at the CSOs' alley, showcasing their work to a wider audience.

Participation at the Molodvizh event provided substantial support to the Centres' teams, enabling them not only to promote their activities to young people but also to raise awareness of the services they offer. Through interactive engagement formats, the teams strengthened their connection with the youth participants, highlighting the Centres' vital role in fostering resilience and promoting social integration.

Regular **capacity building of local CRC team members** (coordinators, youth worker assistants, and psychologists) were a crucial element in establishing and ensuring sustainability of the Centres. During the reporting period, staff and volunteers from the three target cities, along with representatives of local authorities, participated in various training sessions and workshops designed to enhance their skills and knowledge. In particular during the two-day training event entitled Expanding Opportunities and Equality: Community Resilience Development, organized by

the Project at one of the leading TatoHubs in Khmelnytskyi. During this learning event, participants explored essential topics for effective community work with vulnerable families, including the central role of gender equality in building a safe and equitable society.

The training provided local teams with a deeper understanding of GBV issues and reinforced their commitment to prevention and intervention. Insights from successful projects like TatoHub offered practical approaches for community engagement. The training also placed a strong emphasis on collaborative teamwork, enhancing the ability of Centre teams to work seamlessly with partners and create a greater collective impact.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining high-quality training and ongoing support for its trainers, the Project organized regular supervision sessions throughout the year for the authors and trainers of the **No Trivia programme**. These online meetings – attended by trainers from the community of youth workers, educators, and school psychologists in Kamianske, Kremenchuk, and Nizhyn – provided participants with opportunities to connect with like-minded peers. Trainers received essential mental health support, advice on their work from the experienced psychologists who authored the No Trivia programme, enhanced their knowledge of psychological violence prevention, and honed their skills in nonviolent communication for use in future work with young people. In total, 51 trainers (48 women) participated in the supervision sessions throughout the year.

These trainers went on to implement the No Trivia programme in their own communities, focusing on building healthy relationships and preventing GBV among youth. A total of 485 people (292 women) participated in the No Trivia programme during the reporting period.

Moreover, following up on previous success with the establishment of the **“Energy of Your Future”** programme, during the reporting period it was adapted to a day camp format and developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. To ensure the camps would be successful, a 5-day training session and a supervision session for trainers were held at the beginning and end of the reporting period. These sessions equipped staff and volunteers from the Centres with the skills they needed to effectively deliver the program, while also enhancing the overall quality of the day camps. In total, 24 participants (18 girls) attended the training sessions.

After the training session the programme was successfully rolled out in all three communities (Kamianske, Kremenchuk, and Nizhyn) throughout the year. It equipped the young participants with essential skills in communication, cooperation, creativity, critical thinking and career planning, helping to prepare them for future challenges. A total of 348 children (235 girls) participated in the day camps, which were held during school holidays with multiple waves throughout the year.

The annual **Bank of Ideas** youth initiative serves as a vital catalyst for equipping young people with the skills and knowledge they need to identify and address the prevailing issues and needs within their communities. Throughout the reporting period, youth teams who won the Bank of Ideas 3.0 MOLO, Mriy II MOLO, Dream! competition in 2023 successfully implemented several initiatives in Kamianske, Kremenchuk and Nizhyn. These projects covered diverse topics, including digital literacy, civic engagement, mental health support and youth empowerment. One of the notable projects **TvoE** in Nizhyn held a series of workshops focused on upcycling and customizing clothes for youth aged 14-24, promoting responsible consumption. The project also provided mental health support through creative art methods, combining sustainability with personal well-being.

Moreover, all the winning teams participated in the final Bank of Ideas two-day meet-up in Lviv, where they presented the results of their projects and had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with young peers from other regions of Ukraine.

The **Mriyapolis community**, originally formed in 2019 in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, now consists of around 700 active young people from across Ukraine, including participants from local forums in Kamianske, Kremenchuk and Nizhyn. These forums have been instrumental in promoting youth participation in the country's recovery efforts.

In October 2023, a virtual gathering was organized to mark World Mental Health Day, where participants shared their updates, dreams, and plans. The event highlighted the growth and impact of the Mriyapolis community, with many young people reporting significant achievements. These included becoming certified youth workers, completing training on human rights and GBV prevention, delivering lectures on Ukrainian history combating misinformation, coordinating civilian support centres and revitalizing youth councils. Despite the fact that over 60 percent of the Mriyapolis community members have lost their homes

due to the war and are now living in different regions of Ukraine or abroad, the gathering demonstrated their resilience, determination and strong sense of mutual support.

Additionally, the large-scale Mriyapolis youth forum was held, focusing on digitalization and the transformative power of digital technologies. This forum brought together youth from the target communities and beyond. Participants had the opportunity to hear from inspiring speakers, share experiences, and develop their digital skills.

In total, 48 participants (33 girls) from various regions attended the Mriyapolis forum, further strengthening youth engagement in recovery efforts and fostering a sense of unity among the young generation.

Among other activities, a strategic session entitled **Formation of Veteran Policy in Donetsk Oblast** was organized in Dnipro, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, in July 2024, bringing together 62 participants (49 women). The session focused on identifying priorities for veteran policy in Donetsk Oblast, building capacity among local government and military administration specialists, and addressing veterans' needs with public sector support.

In support of active youth initiatives, the Project implemented the following youth-focused activities:

In April 2024, the four-day intensive **Entry Points** practical and educational capacity development event [facilitated](#) partnerships between youth organizations, local government bodies, and community leaders, aiming to promote sustained youth civic engagement. This event involved 19 youth participants from Zakarpattia oblast, including 12 women, 3 IDPs, and 1 person with a disability, to enhance their understanding of local self-government functions and practical methods for involvement.

As a result of this initiative, a collaborative platform was established for open dialogue, fostering mutual respect and cooperation among youth, local government, and community leaders. The event also increased participants' awareness of the significance of local governance, especially in crisis situations, and provided a framework for identifying community issues and barriers to youth civic participation. Equipped with new skills, the youth participants are now empowered to contribute actively and meaningfully to civic life in their communities.

The youth **ideathon #SOLVE_IT**, held on 11-12 April 2024 in Dnipro, [focused](#) on recovery and security, encouraging young people to develop projects that address the specific needs of their communities. Participants had the aims of enhancing community resilience, mental health, and youth policy while improving safety through community policing, cybersecurity and environmental security initiatives.

The event gathered 50 participants from 10 oblasts, including 33 women and 11 IDPs, who generated 34 project ideas. Proposed initiatives included resilience programmes, mental health and well-being support, youth policy empowerment initiatives, and advocacy campaigns related to youth policy in communities. As a result, five quick-impact projects received support, with four already implemented, benefiting 182 direct beneficiaries (including 101 women, 50 IDPs, and 3 persons with disabilities) and 975 indirect beneficiaries. One initiative is still being implemented.

As part of this activity block, two projects focused on recovery and youth engagement received support:

- **The Voice of Youth for Recovery:** This project combined art and youth involvement in recovery efforts, reaching 100 direct beneficiaries (including 50 women, 24 IDPs and 2 persons with disabilities) and 60 indirect beneficiaries.
- **CULT-TOLOKA:** Developed to renovate the youth centre basement and create an art installation, this project benefited 20 direct participants (including 10 women) and 611 indirect beneficiaries.

On 18-22 August 2024, the **InEvolve summer camp** in Moshny village, Cherkasy Oblast, highlighted a strong commitment to fostering youth engagement in Ukraine. Initially launched in 2023, the camp shifted its focus in 2024 to addressing youth engagement, recovery, and community security. Over the course of five days, 30 young leaders (including 20 women and 8 IDPs) from 10 oblasts of Ukraine⁶⁰ [developed](#) their leadership and project management skills. The camp culminated in a Project Fair, where participants presented their initiatives for a mini-initiative contest. As a result, six projects received financial support and are now moving into implementation stage.

The InEvolve summer camp is a strategic platform for young leaders to enhance their leadership skills, engage in meaningful project management activities, and gain deeper understanding of recovery and community security. Utilizing elements of the traditional "camp" format, the programme created an immersive

60 Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy, Zakarpattia and Zaporizhzhia.



SOLVE_IT Youth Ideathon in Dnipro.
Photo credit: Ivan Lavrenko / UNDP in Ukraine

experience through activities like bonfires, squad-based tasks and evening events, fostering a strong sense of community and camaraderie.

As a result of the camp, participants became increasingly engaged in community recovery processes, demonstrated enhanced leadership skills, and strengthened cooperation between the Youth Engagement and Community Security teams. Additionally, a supportive network of young leaders was established across the 12 partner oblasts, leading to successful implementation of six quick-impact projects focused on community security and recovery in communities.

The Project supported two rounds of capacity-building workshops, “aGAIN” and “aGAIN 2.0”, to enhance local student self-government bodies (SSGBs). These workshops encouraged participants to re-evaluate the roles and purposes of SSGBs and to develop new, impactful student-led initiatives to strengthen school governance.

In November 2023, five teams from Poltava oblast, comprising 100 SSGB participants (including 66 women, 18 IDPs, and one person with a disability), [joined](#)

the “aGAIN” program. Four mini-projects were funded, directly benefiting 138 individuals (including 96 women, 16 IDPs, and two persons with disabilities) and reaching 435 indirectly.

In February 2024, as part of the **aGAIN 2.0** initiative, 10 trainers were [trained](#) to deliver local workshops in selected educational institutions. Also, the Project has supported 13 one-day training sessions across Ukraine, attended by 293 participants (including 195 women, 203 IDPs, and eight persons with disabilities). The sessions were conducted by the UNDP team, along with trainers who are current or former leaders of SSGBs. The training covered the fundamental roles of SSGBs, their operational structures, and project management principles. This phase [supported](#) six mini-projects, with four already implemented, reaching 209 direct beneficiaries (including 134 women, 125 IDPs, and 4 persons with disabilities) and 654 indirect beneficiaries.

To support recovery, six pilot communities have established local Recovery and Development Offices, creating a flexible initiative for skill development and community empowerment at both oblast and community levels. Although young people are recognized



Over the course of five days at the InEvolve summer camp, 30 young leaders from 10 oblasts of Ukraine developed their leadership and project management skills. Photo credit: Artem Hetman / UNDP in Ukraine

as key agents of sustainable recovery, they have not been systematically involved in government-led recovery planning. To bridge this gap, the Project [launched](#) workshops to enhance youth participation in recovery-related decision-making.

Intensive training sessions were held in six pilot communities in Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Sumy oblasts, supported by the new Recovery and Development Offices. The training covered youth policy foundations, youth involvement in decision-making, stakeholder collaboration, and youth participation planning for 2024. A total of 120 participants (including 85 women, 19 IDPs) from Dnipropetrovsk, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Sumy oblasts attended. As a result, 46 youth-related issues were identified, and 24 recovery projects were developed.

The **Young Recovery Ambassadors** workshops in 2024 are a continuation of UNDP's initiatives from November-December 2023, intended to enhance youth participation in the recovery process. Building on these efforts, the workshops focused on empowering youth to develop specific proposals for integration into local recovery plans, ensuring that young

people's perspectives and priorities are reflected in community recovery strategies.

A total of 118 participants (including 70 women, 18 IDPs and 2 persons with disabilities) from Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Sumy oblasts participated. As a result, over 26 recovery-focused projects were developed and presented to local authorities for potential inclusion in recovery plans.

For the second consecutive year, the Project supported the **All-Ukrainian Youth Forum 2024**, initiated by the Youth Council under the President of Ukraine, in collaboration with international partners. This forum [brought together](#) 300 young people from diverse backgrounds to develop recommendations for the Youth of Ukraine 2026-2030 State Programme, and to engage in dialogue with government officials at various levels involved in youth-related activities. Participants actively engaged in discussions, developed proposals, and explored UNDP initiatives and opportunities for young people, facilitating a thorough exchange of ideas and resources.

Activity 2.3.2. Establishment and operation of IDP councils or similar IDP representation structures, to enable IDP-led advocacy efforts aiming to address their specific needs and concerns in the host communities; interregional dialogue platforms for technical advice and coordination, exchange of experiences and mutual lesson learning in the area of IDP inclusion.

To support the development of social entrepreneurship in the affected communities between April and December 2023, the Social Entrepreneurship Studios project was implemented with the support of CSRWGs across target communities in Chernihiv and Poltava oblasts. The Project provided mentoring support to authors of mini-initiatives on social entrepreneurship among representatives of IDPs and local communities, including young people. In total, 116 participants (including 102 women, 33 IDPs and 2 veterans) gained new skills across the target communities.

During the reporting period, the network of dialogue platforms in **Zakarpattia Oblast** facilitated 3 IDP Councils and 1 Working Group focused on inclusion in Perechyn, Svaliava, Mukachevo and Uzhhorod. These ses-

sions engaged a total of 85 participants (67 women). Additionally, the Zakarpattia IDP Councils Network conducted a series of activities, including 13 project management training events across various communities, 3 advocacy, networking, and local analysis training events, 10 “Safe Communities” game sessions, and 4 social picnics. These events collectively engaged 542 participants (374 women).

Moreover, as part of the TOLOKA of IDEAS in Mukachevo in December 2023, two mini-initiatives were supported: creation of ‘a Safe Space’ at Mukachevo State University, which offered training and educational sessions on key community safety topics such as bullying, safe educational environments and GBV prevention; as well as a project focused on providing inclusive access to the Mukachevo Drama Theatre for vulnerable groups, including 107 IDPs, 232 children and 130 youth. A total of 1,042 community members (621 women) benefited from these activities.

During the strategic session in Mukachevo on 2 February 2024, 25 participants (16 women) identified key community needs, outlined benefits, and assessed risks for the ‘social town’ initiative. They defined core



Dynamic intensive “Toloka of Ideas Mukachevo: Security, Inclusion, Integration”, held in Mukachevo in December 2023.
Photo credit: Artem Hetman / UNDP in Ukraine



The Second Regional Forum of IDP Councils, organized by the Chernivtsi City Council and the Department of Social Policy, with support from UNHCR and UNDP in Ukraine, under the EU4Recovery initiative.

activities, required resources, and proposed a functional design prioritizing inclusiveness and accessibility. The session also focused on risk mitigation and developed a clear action plan, assigning responsibilities for implementation.

In alignment with the Project objectives, The “Create your own Uzhhorod” IDEATHON was [initiated](#) by the Coordination Council for IDPs in Uzhhorod from 28 February to 1 March 2024, to empower community members and IDPs, including vulnerable groups, to address challenges through a structured process, from issue research to project proposal development. Additionally, it sought to secure support for implementing the best ideas and boost CSO representatives’ skills through preliminary training and event participation. Of 54 teams, 11 finalists presented their projects to the competition committee, with 7 receiving funding from UNDP, UNHCR, Caritas Czech Republic and SOS Children’s Villages.

Moving forward, on 4 April, the Regional Forum of IDP Councils [took place](#) in Chernivtsi, co-organized by the Project and the Department of Social Policy of Chernivtsi City. The Forum was held to reflect on the work of the IDP Councils in the oblast, explore approaches

to IDP integration in host communities, and assess the platform’s role in sustainable development and community capacity-building.

The event, attended by 108 participants (including 86 women), concluded with the adoption of a resolution outlining recommendations and next steps to enhance the IDP Council system in Chernivtsi, leveraging lessons learned and successful practices.

Shifting focus, the Veterans and Community Regional Forum, held in Uzhhorod on 18-19 July 2024, brought together stakeholders to discuss the implementation of veterans’ policies in crisis and recovery contexts. The forum focused on improving social services for veterans in Zakarpattia region, and examining pathways for their reintegration.

The forum gathered 105 participants (79 women) to discuss the reintegration of veterans, community best practices, and the challenges faced by veterans’ NGOs in Zakarpattia. It emphasized support for the families of fallen defenders and public sector rehabilitation efforts. The event concluded with a resolution recommending improved collaboration among stakeholders in veteran support.



The regional forum was organized by the Department of Social Protection of the Population of Zakarpattia Oblast State Administration with the support of EU4Recovery. Photo credit: UNDP Ukraine

During the reporting period, the Chernivtsi Oblast IDP Councils Network across the target communities (Chernivtsi, Hlyboka, Khotyn, Mamalyha, Nedoboivtsy and Vyzhnytsia), updated its composition, appointing new representatives from the IDP community and public sector, including IDP chairpersons in Chernivtsi, Mamalyha and Vyzhnytsia. A total of 38 council meetings were held, engaging 67 participants (47 women). The network facilitated project applications for 11 mini-initiatives and provided essential resources – including meeting equipment and furniture – to IDP councils. Social picnics were organized in four communities, with two more planned for late September to discuss economic initiatives. Project management training was conducted in five communities, engaging 102 participants from IDP councils, local authorities, and communities.

Additionally, in communities in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Poltava oblasts, six projects aimed at creating sports and tourism spaces for veterans, music spaces, a roboclub, and safe and comfortable public transport stops were supported within the Ideathon Re-Safe, benefiting a total of 1,466 individuals by the end of the year.

Furthermore, across Dnipropetrovsk and Rivne oblasts, two projects supported by the Strengthening Social Cohesion and Youth Engagement in Target Communities contest are intended to create a platform for social interaction among youth initiatives and host events for IDP integration, with a planned reach of 1,720 direct beneficiaries.

OUTPUT 2.4

RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS' CAPACITIES, FUNCTIONS AND TOOLS ARE STRENGTHENED TO EXPAND ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Activity 2.4.1. Professional development of legal and justice service providers in relation to new legal challenges connected to mass displacement of people and war-related crimes, including GBV/CRSV, damaged and lost property, etc.

The recent UNDP survey assessing the needs and perceptions of veterans and their families in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, and Sumy oblasts has identified significant challenges faced by veterans, their families, and families of fallen service members. Prominent among these challenges are economic hardship, legal barriers, and limited awareness of available support services. These issues are further exacerbated by regional disparities, with vulnerable groups such as injured veterans and widows experiencing heightened difficulties.

The survey highlights that 57 percent of veterans required legal assistance following their discharge, with the highest demand observed in Kharkiv Oblast, likely due to a larger population of veterans with injuries or disabilities. Injured veterans face particularly complex legal issues, including matters related to status recognition, pensions, financial support, appeals against military decisions, and court representation. Legal concerns extend to areas such as medical care, family law, property rights, labour rights and entrepreneurship, with injured and female veterans often encountering greater challenges. Families of fallen soldiers also face legal hurdles in securing benefits, obtaining death certificates, and accessing one-time cash assistance, all of which necessitate documentation and understanding of post-service benefits.

Compounding these challenges, a lack of awareness and general distrust in legal institutions persist, particularly among female veterans and families in Kharkiv Oblast, who report higher dissatisfaction levels. While 64 percent of veterans are aware of the Free Legal Aid System (FLAS), only 17 percent have utilized its services, with Chernihiv Oblast showing the highest utilization rate, at 22 percent. Despite increased awareness among injured veterans, a substantial 78 percent had not sought assistance, underscoring a gap between awareness and actual engagement with FLAS. Moreover, 25 percent of veterans opted for

private lawyers due to perceived deficiencies within FLAS, such as distrust, negative feedback, and prolonged wait times.

In response to these findings, the Project has partnered with FLAS to enhance its capacity to provide effective, high-quality legal services. This partnership involves the development of FLAS's internal training capabilities, with a focus on improving communication with vulnerable groups and fostering professional growth among FLAS employees. By establishing a qualified pool of internal trainers in FLAS, the Project aims to support continuous learning and development, ensuring FLAS personnel can acquire the competencies needed to meet the complex legal needs of veterans and their families. This initiative is part of a broader transition to a competency-based approach within FLAS, with an emphasis on monitoring, quality assurance and skill enhancement. Through these efforts, the Project seeks to reinforce FLAS's organizational and professional capacities, ensuring sustained provision of reliable and responsive legal services.

To strengthen the capacity of FLAS and ensure continuous professional development of its personnel, the Project supported several key activities:

- [Conducted](#) two training-of-trainers sessions on communication with vulnerable groups in Kyiv in July 2024, attended by 30 participants, including 25 women.
- Conducted two training-of-trainers sessions on managing professional development in Kyiv in July-August 2024, attended by 30 participants, including 21 women.

Additionally, the FLAS trainers are disseminating their acquired knowledge and skills to colleagues through a series of cascade trainings:

- Eight two-day cascade training events on communication with vulnerable client groups have been held in Kyiv (59 participants, including 46 women) and Lviv (60 participants, including 53 women).
- Five two-day cascade training events on managing professional development are scheduled to occur before the end of October 2024 in Kyiv and Lviv. Two training events have already been held in Lviv (33 participants, including 29 women).



Training-of-trainers session for FLAS lawyers on communication with vulnerable groups in Kyiv.
Photo credit: Serhii Minenko / UNDP in Ukraine

Moreover, the Project delivered a training session on supportive leadership and fostering a culture of psychological safety in teams in Kyiv for 20 participants (including 19 women), involving heads of bureaus, departments and divisions of the Interregional Centres for Free Legal Aid Provision. Additionally, two training sessions on psychosocial support for FLAS personnel operating under conditions of martial law are scheduled to take place in Kyiv before the end of November 2024.

To support the professional growth of legal and justice service providers, the Project has also committed to developing a comprehensive system of methodologies, competency models, and tools to monitor and evaluate the quality of the FLAS training processes. This initiative is intended to embed continuous learning and professional development into FLAS's organizational culture, supported by sustainable quality monitoring of personnel knowledge and skills. The Project will also revise existing methodologies to meet high quality standards, while creating additional components to assess and enhance the training process within FLAS, ensuring long-term effectiveness and excellence. A contract has been finalized with the individual contractor, who is expected to complete the assignment by March 2025.

Activity 2.4.2. Strengthen the local capacities of the Ombudsperson's Office and FLAS to communicate and provide clear guidance on rules and procedures during wartime, enhancing coordination with other stakeholders.

Following the sudden escalation of military activities, judiciary and FLAS personnel were compelled to evacuate from war-affected areas, including Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Sumy Oblasts, leaving office equipment at their duty stations. During the period when these territories were not under the control of the Government of Ukraine, much of this equipment was either destroyed or removed. As these institutions resume operations in newly accessible areas, they require substantial support to rebuild and enhance their capacity to deliver justice services to the war-affected local population, including returnees and IDPs.

To effectively restart and sustain local courts and FLAS offices in these regions, assistance is needed to procure essential office equipment. This will enable both resident and relocated staff to adequately meet the justice needs of the local population, whether permanent or temporary residents.

In 2023, the local courts in the target oblasts experienced a significant increase in case numbers compared to 2022.⁶¹ Kharkiv had the highest volume with 213,417 cases, a significant rise of 132.15 percent. Donetsk Oblast followed with 65,086 cases, or 86.67 percent growth and Chernihiv reported 102,294 cases (up 75.76 percent).⁶² Overall, these figures indicate a strong upward trend in court activity across these oblasts, underscoring the growing demand and workload in the judicial system.

Moreover, the local court compositions in 2023⁶³ reveals that Kherson, with only 22 staffed positions of judges in local courts compared to a planned 63, is operating at roughly 35 percent capacity, which poses a challenge for timely legal processes in the region. Kharkiv faces severe staffing challenges as well, with only 163 judges working, compared to a planned 360 positions, meaning it is functioning at approximately 45 percent of its intended capacity. In Chernihiv, Mykolaiv, and Donetsk the situations are also concerning but less critical. Chernihiv operates at approximately 53 percent of planned capacity with 87 working judges versus 164, while Mykolaiv is functioning at 50 percent with 93 out of 186. Donetsk court system operates with just 65 compositions out of 113 planned or about 57 percent of full staffing.

Sumy and Zaporizhzhia have relatively lower percentages but still reflect significant understaffing.

Overall, the situation of local courts in Ukraine illustrates a critical need for resources and staffing. The combination of high case volumes and inadequate personnel hampers the ability of these courts to fulfil their judicial responsibilities, potentially undermining public trust in the legal system and delaying access to justice.

In this context, FLAS played a vital role in 2024, serving 73,608 clients (59.2 percent women). The highest number of clients came from Chernihiv (17,132 persons), Kharkiv (16,832) and Sumy (18,195) oblasts.⁶⁴ However, disparities in staffing levels among FLAS re-

flect the broader challenges facing the judicial system. Mykolaiv has the highest number of employees (38), while Donetsk has the lowest (4),⁶⁵ exacerbating the difficulties meeting the legal needs of the population. This disparity underscores the urgent requirement for resources and personnel across the board to ensure that both local courts and FLAS can effectively address the justice needs of war-affected communities.

In response to the challenges identified, a total of 93 multi-functional devices, 44 printers, and 126 personal computers were provided in July 2024 to local courts and FLAS offices in Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia,⁶⁶ with a total budgetary allocation of \$191,680.

Activity 2.4.3. Technical assistance to relocated FLAS lawyers and judiciary, including provision of vehicles and equipment to boost the outreach and expansion of services across target areas.

Maintaining the functionality of the legal and justice system is of particular importance in areas near the frontline, including Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Sumy Oblasts, where judiciary and FLAS personnel had to evacuate following the sudden escalation of military activities. During the period when these territories were not under the control of the Government of Ukraine, most of the equipment left behind during the relocation was destroyed or removed. To effectively restore operations in these newly accessible areas, judiciary institutions and FLAS require assistance in re-establishing their asset base and enhancing their capacity to provide justice services to the local war-affected population, including returnees and IDPs.

Equally crucial for the continued timely delivery of quality legal assistance is the FLAS hotline. Since the onset of the full-scale war, the number of calls has increased dramatically due to heightened legal needs, especially among vulnerable groups such as IDPs, residents of temporarily uncontrolled territories, and returnees.

61 Council of Judges of Ukraine (2023) Oryentovna normatyvna Chysel'nist' Suddiv zahal'nykh mistsevykh sudiv za danymy zvitnosti za 2023 Rik* [Approximate normative number of judges of general local courts according to reporting data for the year 2023*], at https://rsu.gov.ua/mzs-2023_4-maps.

62 Increase in case numbers in Mykolaiv Oblast: 117,375 cases (up 68.44 percent), Zaporizhzhia and Sumy oblasts: 116,489 cases (up 51.30 percent) and 105,330 cases (up 50.92 percent), respectively. Kherson Oblast – 30,377 cases (did not operate in 2022).

63 This includes a judge, a judge's assistant, and the secretary of proceedings. However, this figure does not account for the personnel of the court secretariats, as their numbers are not available.

64 Number of FLAS clients in Donetsk Oblast – 2,151; Kherson Oblast – 2,538, Mykolaiv Oblast – 8,900; Zaporizhzhia – 6,860.

65 Free Legal Aid Service (n.d.) Vsi tsntri [All Centres], at <https://legalaid.gov.ua/tsentry/>, accessed 31 October 2024.

66 Chernihiv Oblast (5 multi-functional devices for FLAS), Donetsk Oblast (44 printers and 44 PCs for local courts) Kharkiv Oblast (5 multi-functional devices for FLAS), Kherson Oblast (2 multi-functional devices for FLAS, 19 PCs for local courts), Mykolaiv Oblast (5 multi-functional devices for FLAS, 26 multi-functional devices for local courts), Sumy Oblast (5 multi-functional devices for FLAS, 22 PCs for local courts) and Zaporizhzhia Oblast (4 multi-functional devices for FLAS, 41 multi-functional devices and 41 PCs for local courts).

Additionally, the decision to direct requests received through the Ministry of Justice's hotline to FLAS offices in Chernivtsi and Sumy has further underscored the need for robust hotline support in these areas.

To address these issues, the Project has committed to procuring office and IT equipment⁶⁷ essential for restoring and enhancing the operational effectiveness of local courts and FLAS offices in war-affected territories. This provision will enable these institutions to adequately address the justice needs of both permanent and temporary residents in these areas.

Activity 2.4.4. Awareness-raising in project target areas in regard to available support and services, and to improve legal literacy in relation to war damages, GBV/CRSV, family and labour issues, to enable them to claim their right and access justice.

Despite serving vulnerable populations, awareness of the FLAS remains low among potential clients. Although FLAS has operated for over a decade, public knowledge of its services is still limited, though it is gradually increasing each year. To address this, the Project has supported the procurement of visibility materials for dissemination in target oblasts.

In its commitment to improving the accessibility and effectiveness of justice, the Project has also strengthened the organizational and professional capacities of the FLAS. This effort is intended to enable FLAS staff to communicate effectively about the system and its services, thereby enhancing service quality and efficiency. Based on a capacity assessment and consultations, the Project facilitated the procurement of specific software for processing audio-visual content and social media advertising services to support this objective.

FLAS plays a crucial role in raising public awareness of rights and entitlements, particularly for individuals affected by conflict. To support effective development and dissemination of relevant content, professional equipment has been acquired to ensure high-quality communication and outreach efforts, further enhancing the system's ability to inform and assist those in need.

To enhance awareness among potential clients of the FLAS, in June 2024 the Project provided visibility materials, developed by FLAS lawyers, to FLAS offices in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Sumy, and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts. The distribution comprised

50,000 booklets, 2,000 posters, and 100 t-shirts, with a budget of \$3,000.

The following subscriptions and services, requested by FLAS, have been provided to the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, which is responsible for managing and overseeing FLAS, in February 2024 for a period of 12 months with a budget of \$4,700:

- Canva for Teams for image visualization and graphic work
- Stripo for creating monthly newsletters
- Articulate Rise 360 for developing online courses
- SendPulse for creation and distributing newsletters, including announcements of training events, online courses and updates on FLAS activities
- Access to resume databases and job posting services on rabota.ua
- Budgetary allocations for advertising campaigns on Facebook and Instagram
- Adobe Photoshop for preparing visual content for publications on FLAS information resources

To enhance FLAS's capacity to disseminate information regarding its services and beneficiaries' rights, the Project has approved the procurement of and requested content-creation IT equipment, which includes three laptops for the content development (two laptops to be transferred to the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, and one to the Eastern-Southern Interregional Centre for Free Secondary Legal Aid Provision) and one graphic laptop (to be transferred to the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision). This equipment is essential for strengthening the FLAS's outreach capabilities, enabling it to raise awareness more effectively among the general population about their rights and entitlements, particularly for those affected by conflict. The budget of this initiative is \$5,000, with the delivery scheduled by December 2024. This initiative will play a significant role in increasing public access to justice and legal support services.

During September-November 2023, the Project comprehensively supported the development and testing of training materials on the protection and restoration of the rights of individuals in the field of war crimes and legal relations for the free legal aid system. In particular, training materials were developed on topics such as mobilization, conscription, establishing the facts of deaths in combat, relevant payments and their types, as well as the specifics of military criminal offences during martial law. In October 2023, the Project supported a series of training-of-trainers sessions for lawyers cooperating with the FLAS and FLAS staff

⁶⁷ Fifty laptops, 12 headsets, 6 tablets, 21 version control systems and 14 servers are expected to be delivered by November 2024.

with 16 participants (11 women). In November-December 2023, the Project facilitated 9 training sessions for lawyers working with 9 regional centres for free secondary legal aid in Chernihiv, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia. A total of 241 lawyers (119 women) participated in these events.

Activity 2.4.5. Build NPU capacities in project target areas for CRSV casework, including the provision of mobile forensic labs for CRSV evidence collection.

Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, there has been extensive evidence and reports of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including CRSV. Documented cases of CRSV involve women, men, girls and boys, and it is anticipated that the number of documented cases will continue to rise as the conflict persists and more evidence, survivor testimonies, reports, and allegations emerge, which is typical for CRSV.

In this context, there is an urgent need to strengthen the capacities of the NPU to effectively document and investigate war crimes, including CRSV. Although the NPU is equipped with Rapid DNA identification technology, a lack of expertise continues to hinder its ability to gather and analyse critical forensic evidence.

Therefore, specialized training is urgently required for forensic staff to enable the application of modern techniques in evidence collection, preservation, and analysis in accordance with international standards. Without these improvements, the NPU's ability to systematically and effectively investigate war crimes, including CRSV, is compromised, limiting potential for successful prosecution and justice. Strengthening these capacities is essential for developing a robust response to war crimes and documenting evidence that will support future legal proceedings, both domestically and internationally.

To address this challenge, the Project organized a series of training sessions. The first session took place from 16-20 September 2024 in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, instructing 27 forensic investigators (including 8 women) from across Ukraine on use of high-speed DNA profiling technology.

This training is part of a broader initiative to enhance the NPU's capacity to efficiently collect and analyse DNA evidence, ensuring that forensic units are equipped to

manage the complexities of war crime investigations. By introducing rapid DNA identification techniques, the training has better prepared investigators to promptly collect, process, and document genetic evidence: an essential component in identifying both victims and perpetrators of war crimes, including CRSV.

The training also incorporated a review of best international practices, ensuring that NPU investigators are current with modern forensic methods, thereby enabling them to operate more effectively in the field. This practical approach significantly enhances the NPU's ability to gather and preserve critical evidence, contributing to stronger accountability and justice efforts within Ukraine.

Activity 2.4.6. Support and develop the capacity of NGOs/CSOs for legal aid casework and advocacy in project target areas.

In alignment with the main goal to support and develop the capacity of NGOs and CSOs for legal aid casework and advocacy, implementation of nine grant projects is underway as part of the Access to Justice in Target Communities initiative.

These projects focus on enhancing access to justice by providing free primary and secondary legal support to vulnerable groups, offering paralegal assistance for obtaining compensation for property damaged or destroyed due to military aggression, and promoting access to justice through innovative approaches, such as gaming technologies. These initiatives are being carried out in Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, and Sumy Oblasts, with an anticipated total of 3,664 direct and more than 31,600 indirect beneficiaries with the total budget of \$73,066. The projects are currently ongoing.

Activity 2.4.7. Enhancing the access to justice of survivors of GBV, including CRSV, by legally empowering them and strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors on preventing and combating GBV against women and girls by applying a survivor centred approach.

During the reporting period the Project focused on enhancing coordination, prevention, and response to GBV including CRSV in the target communities. Prevention and response to GBV/CRSV as part of the recovery agenda was addressed during six coordination and review meetings in Dnipro, Donetsk and Poltava

Oblast State Administrations. As a result, partnerships, referrals, and coordination between actors in public sector of target oblasts improved. However, GBV and domestic violence remain among the key issues that the regional administrations and community leaders focus on due to the influx of IDPs and returnees.

Key attention was paid to **enhancing access for justice for survivors of violence**. Consequently, 1,518 survivors received coordinated GBV services. In addition, the skills and knowledge of 1,505 justice actors were improved. This contributed to strengthening coordinated services for survivors at community level, allowing survivors of GBV and domestic violence to gain easy access to justice and support through community and online service centres.

To strengthened community mechanisms on prevention and response to GBV/CRSV in the selected target communities, the Project conducted six training events for 125 representatives of CSOs and women's support groups (71 women) in 12 target communities⁶⁸ of Dnipro, Donetsk and Poltava oblasts. In addition, 40 GBV actors from Dnipropetrovsk and Poltava oblasts increased their awareness and knowledge of GBV prevention and response including existing incidence, services, and referral mechanisms available. Furthermore, 12 dialogue sessions were held with police, judges, and prosecutors in Dnipropetrovsk and Poltava oblasts and community leaders (118 participants, including 88 women) on GBV issues in hard-to-reach areas.

Collaboration and partnership at local level was strengthened by the signing of memoranda of understanding between NGOs Slavic Heart, Martin's Club and Kramatorsk Police. It is expected that a sustainable impact on survivors' services will continue after the Project ends.

The Project also conducted a mapping of GBV services and providers in 12 selected communities, identifying knowledge gaps and establishing service points in 10 locations across Dnipropetrovsk (Dnipro, Kryvyi Rih, Obukhivka, Pidhorodne and Synelnykove) and Poltava (Dykanka, Kremenchuk, Lubny, Myrhorod and Poltava) oblasts. Activities also included a technical training for GBV actors on domestic violence issues, along with 10 dialogue sessions and 3 coordination

meetings to enhance collaboration among service providers. Additionally, three review meetings were held to assess best practices and develop referral pathways to improve coordination of GBV services for survivors. Training was held to enhance the ability of 205 police, legal aid service providers, prosecutors, social workers and medical personnel to provide coordinated services at community level in the target oblasts⁶⁹ on international standards of management of GBV in humanitarian settings, survivor-centred justice, implementing the Istanbul Convention, use of documented cases as a basis for best practice in the administration of justice for survivors and improving access to justice for survivors in Ukraine.

Through training and dialogues, the service providers and actors identified coordination challenges in investigating and prosecuting GBV cases. They recommended mechanisms to address these challenges, which were documented to develop survivor-oriented standards. These recommendations were presented to the Office of the Prosecutor General (OPG), NPU, and MIA.

In addition, the Project provided GBV/VAWG forensic investigation training to 20 prosecutors and police from target oblasts. The training was intended to improve knowledge and skills in investigating GBV cases, particularly domestic violence cases, using a survivor-centred approach. The three-day offline training session was conducted from 19th to 21st April 2024, and the key output was the development of the video course⁷⁰ published on the OPG website and Jurfem Training Centre website to support ongoing learning and provide references for the participants to enhance their competencies and skills when dealing with domestic violence cases, following international and regional frameworks.

Finally, the video course Peculiarities of Criminal Proceedings Regarding Criminal Offenses Related to Domestic Violence Through the Prism of Survivor-centred Approaches was produced for prosecutors and investigators. The topics covered by the course include the peculiarities of legal qualification of criminal offences related to domestic violence, ensuring a survivor-centred approach during criminal proceedings, and effective referral of domestic violence survivors. The video course was published online in April 2024.⁷¹

68 Dnipropetrovsk Oblast: Dnipro, Kryvyi Rih, Obukhiv community, Pidgorodne, Synelnykove. Donetsk Oblast: Slovyansk, Svyatogirsk. Poltava Oblast: Dykanka community, Kremenchuk, Lubny, Myrhorod, Poltava.

69 For Dnipro: 7, 8, 13, 14 and 16 February 2024 in Dnipro. For Donetsk: 17, 18, 25 and 26 January 2024 in Dnipro. For Poltava: 29 and 30 January, 5, 6 and 8 February 2024 in Poltava.

70 Jur:fem Education Centre (n.d.) Video course "Do no harm. Peculiarities of protection of victims of sexual violence", at <https://jurfemosvita.com/courses/nenashkod/>, accessed 31 October 2024.

71 Jur:fem webinars (April 2024) Peculiarities of Criminal Proceedings Regarding Criminal Offenses Related to Domestic Violence Through the Prism of Survivor-centred Approaches, at www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZiYg6qnT7qUGhkhpk39gNdpviZbRpGe4.

OUTPUT 2.5

INCLUSION AND RE-INTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS SUPPORTED THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED REINTEGRATION APPROACHES

Activity 2.5.1. Provision of technical assistance and advice to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs (MVA) in the formulation of a roadmap in support of the transition of ex-combatants from military to civilian life, including the setup of one-stop shop services for veterans at subnational level.

The challenge of reintegration is not necessarily deferred until the cessation of hostilities. Increasingly, community-based reintegration support is being implemented in ongoing conflict environments. Ukraine is a pressing example of this, as over 1.3 million veterans⁷² are anticipated to eventually leave the frontlines even as the conflict continues.

The process of reintegration in Ukraine has already commenced, with veterans who develop disabilities or chronic illnesses demobilizing and beginning their reintegration journey. These individuals, alongside their families – as well as the families of active service members, those held captive, and those who have fallen in combat – are embarking on a path that necessitates comprehensive and sustained support. This support should include economic, social, and psychological assistance to address their diverse needs holistically.

With no clear end to the conflict in sight, it is evident that the largest single caseload to date will likely require reintegration support. Given this demographic, targeted economic development and assistance are crucial, as these veterans may seek to become entrepreneurs or enter the workforce, thus contributing to both their own livelihoods and the broader economic recovery.

Preliminary estimates indicate that during a potential demobilization phase, the number of veterans and family members seeking support could reach an un-

precedented 5 to 6 million individuals.⁷³ This raises questions about the feasibility of relying solely on a traditional, individual-based model of reintegration support. Consequently, there is significant scope to examine the role of community-based approaches to reintegration in Ukraine, drawing not only on emerging practices within the country but also considering future needs and opportunities.

The reintegration of veterans is supported by the Project at both the national and regional levels. At the national level, the Project collaborates with MVA and MSP.

In partnership with the **MVA**, the Project, during the reporting period, supported the activities of Veteran Development Centres. The Veteran Development Centres are a pilot project of the MVA, established at higher education institutions. Currently, there are 14 such centres across various regions of Ukraine. The primary goal of this initiative is to ensure the reintegration of veterans into civilian life, enhance their professional competence and mobility in the labour market, and create conditions for their employment, particularly through the development of entrepreneurial initiatives. These centres also train specialists who support war veterans and demobilized men and women. A two-day networking event was organized to bring together experts from Veteran Development Centres across Ukraine, aimed at defining their role in the long-term reintegration of Ukrainian veterans.⁷⁴

Discussions centred on community-level reintegration, exploring the needs, opportunities, and challenges faced by these centres, and formulating a unified vision for their role within the broader veteran reintegration framework. The event was attended by 59 participants (34 women) from 11 oblasts, who collaboratively developed an operational plan for the Network of Veteran Development Centres. Representa-

72 Suspline News Agency (July 2024) V Ukraini 1 mil'yon 300 tysyach veteraniv: yak yikh pidtrymuyut' [There are 1,300,000 veterans in Ukraine: how are they supported], at <https://suspline.media/798951-v-ukraini-1-miljon-300-tisac-veteraniv-ak-ih-pidtrimuyut/>.

73 Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (n.d.) Minveteraniv formuye novu derzhavnu veterans'ku polityku z urakhuvannyam potreb ta zapytu veterans'koyi spil'noty, — Maksym Kushnir [The Ministry of Veterans is forming a new state veteran policy taking into account the needs and requests of the veteran community, — Maksym Kushnir], at <https://mva.gov.ua/prescenter/category/86-novini/minveteraniv-formuye-novu-derzhavno-veteransku-politiku-z-urakhuvannyam-potreb-ta-zapytu-veteranskoj-spilnoti--maksim-kushnir>, accessed 31 October 2024.

74 This activity was co-funded by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



A networking event for specialists from Veteran Development Centres, Kyiv, 3 June 2024.
Photo credit: Danylo Pavlov / UNDP in Ukraine.

tives of key ministries, including the MSP, the Ministry of Economy, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, actively contributed to the expert discussions.

Further support was extended to project initiatives from Veteran Development Centres, with four projects funded across Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. These civic initiatives focused on supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of the veterans and their families, social reintegration, entrepreneurship development and participation in local decision-making process.

Additionally, support was provided for developing a methodology for the self-assessment of community readiness for veterans' reintegration, in collaboration with the National University of Ostroh Academy. It is expected that the developed methodology will be used by local self-government bodies, CSOs working with veterans, and veteran communities to conduct community assessment and monitoring which will raise awareness and enable development of quality services to meet the needs of veterans and their families.

In collaboration with the **MSP**, a pilot programme was launched to provide social adaptation services for vet-

erans and their families. These services will be delivered through CSOs or community organizations. The initial process comprises the following steps:

- Three CSOs were selected from among social service providers in Dnipropetrovsk, Chernivtsi, Poltava and Sumy Oblasts. The CSOs commenced their activities in September and October 2024.
- A training session for multidisciplinary teams, in line with service standards, was conducted on 29-31 July 2024. The session, entitled The Work of a Multidisciplinary Team to Provide Social Services for the Social Adaptation of War Veterans and Their Families in Communities, was attended by 31 participants (24 women).
- Following the piloting of the service, a training of trainers programme will be developed and implemented through the network of regional centres for social services. Additionally, methodological recommendations for implementing this service are planned for release by December 2024.

Moreover, the Project supported the organization and holding of the Seventh International Veterans Forum "Ukraine. Veterans. Unity", which took place on 22 August 2024 in Kyiv with the participation of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Ruslan Stefanchuk. About

700 veterans, members of their families and families of fallen soldiers took part in the forum. Among the guests were also Ukrainian and foreign government officials, people's deputies, representatives of the national authorities and local self-government bodies, international partners. The purposes of the event were to draw attention to the problems of the veteran community, emphasize the importance of supporting veterans in the state and create the necessary conditions for their reintegration into civilian life. The Project contributed to successful organization of the event by providing a range of equipment and technical support, including specialized IT, video and broadcasting equipment and software.

At **regional level**, the Project facilitates dialogue between the government, civil society, veterans, and families of fallen soldiers by supporting thematic forums and sessions, including:

- The Veterans and Community: Exploring Opportunities for Reintegration, Transcarpathian Regional Forum held in July 2024;
- A Strategic Session on the Development of Veteran Policy in Donetsk Oblast.

These events were intended to bring together all relevant stakeholders to discuss reintegration needs and

opportunities for veterans and their families. Among the issues raised were rehabilitation and psychological support, developing quality social services for veterans in communities, successful implementation of veteran policies at community level, and identifying opportunities for the public sector to meet adaptation and reintegration needs. The participants confirmed that it is essential to ensure a maximally inclusive process for the return and adaptation of Ukrainian veterans to civilian life after the war.

Furthermore, to share Ukraine's experience in reintegration of veterans, the Project supported the participation of Ukraine's delegation at the International Symposium on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, which took place on 3-7 June 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. The event gathered experts from nearly 20 countries who implements instruments for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration as well as partner states supporting post-war development.

During this event, Deputy Minister for Veterans Affairs of Ukraine Ruslan Prykhodko and Plus-Plus Poltava Veteran Hub coordinator Yuliana Lynnyk presented Ukraine's experience in organizing support systems and reintegrating veterans and their families in Ukraine during the war, through existing public services and



"Veterans and Community: Exploring Opportunities for Reintegration" Regional Forum held on 18-19 July 2024 in Uzhhorod.
Photo credit: Mykhailo Melnychenko / UNDP in Ukraine.

social benefits for veterans, support mechanisms offered by the NGO sector, and local community initiatives. The participation in the event fostered strengthened intergovernmental cooperation, exchange of experiences, and support for the implementation of veteran policy in Ukraine.

In addition, the Project also works on developing innovative instruments, including the digitalization of veterans' services. Among such instruments is the "Ya-veteran" [I'm a Veteran] system in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast which helps create conditions for wide-ranging social, legal, medical, psychological support to be provided to veterans and their family members at subnational level. During the reporting period, the I'm a Veteran platform was upgraded for ASCs in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. The enhanced platform expanded the list of services for veterans and their families from about 100 to 300, ensuring access to these services in one place without long waits. Already 20,000 veterans in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast have used the I'm a Veteran system across the oblast's ASCs.

At the **community level**, the Project facilitated the implementation of a community-based approach to veterans' reintegration through various strategic activities.

- In response to community requests, six strategic sessions were organized to develop effective veterans' reintegration plans that considered local needs and resources:
 - Two sessions on the community-based approach to rehabilitation in Poltava Oblast, with 30 participants (26 women) in Myrhorod and 33 participants (22 women) in Poltava.
 - Two sessions in Chernihiv Oblast aimed at developing local programmes and key directions for veterans' reintegration, including 45 participants (36 women) in Ripky and Ivanivka.
 - Two sessions in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast focused on establishing Veterans Centres, with 29 participants (21 women) in Novomoskovsk and 31 participants (24 women) in Ternivka.
- The Project also supported the establishment of 11 veterans' hubs⁷⁵ throughout 2024, which provided spaces for veterans to connect, access resources, and receive support.

Activity 2.5.2. Capacity development for CSOs, local authorities, social services providers on the principles of effective and inclusive work with women and men ex-combatants.

The Project is continuing its work to increase the quality and access to required services, including psychological support, for war-affected people, veterans and their family members.

In light of the increased attention paid to the mental health of Ukrainians following the events of 24 February 2022, the all-Ukrainian psychological aid hotline was launched in partnership with the National Psychological Association. With support from the Project, the toll-free hotline is continuing to operate across 22 European countries where the number of Ukrainians is significant. The hotline provides audio and video calls, and operates on a single Ukrainian number available every day. In 2023, the hotline added an internet call option via the <https://help.npa-ua.org> platform, allowing access to the hotline from other countries, as well as from areas of oblasts that have not been under the control of the Government of Ukraine since 2014. During the reporting period, the line operated in an enhanced mode, requiring an increase in the number of specialist shifts. This adjustment was necessary as the national suicide prevention line (Lifeline Ukraine) temporarily ceased operations in April 2024, resulting in many partner services, as well as 102 and 103 emergency lines, redirecting callers to the all-Ukrainian psychological aid hotline.

To ensure the delivery of high-quality psychological assistance via the hotline, the Project provided supervisory support to a team of 15 psychologists (comprising 14 core team members and one backup specialist) and 2 psychiatrists. These professionals received additional training in crisis intervention and individual psychological support, including modules on the fundamentals of trauma therapy.

Thanks to support from the Project, a total of 4,591 Ukrainians (3,198 women, 82 percent from Ukraine and 18 percent from other countries) received much-needed psychological assistance and crisis support. The Project provided 3,612 individual consultations with psychologists and 621 medical consultations with psychiatrists. The primary issues addressed were insomnia, family conflicts, and stress related to the loss of housing and employment. After the crisis consulta-

⁷⁵ Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Nizhyn, Pryluky, Ripky (Chernihiv Oblast), Kamianske and Novomoskovsk (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast), Myrhorod and Poltava (Poltava Oblast), and two hubs in Zaporizhzhia.

tion, hotline psychologists could also direct callers to specialized services, such as long-term psychological counselling, medical services, etc. Notably, 90 percent of respondents reported an improvement in their condition and expressed satisfaction with the service provided, with 17 percent returning for assistance with additional issues.

A significant achievement of the all-Ukrainian psychological aid hotline is the development of accessible primary psychological care services, which serve as a preventive measure against more serious mental health issues. This, in turn, helps alleviate the burden on the health care systems both in Ukraine and in other countries where the service is operational.

In addition, to support psychological first aid services at community level, particularly through the digitization of school psychologist services, 68 tablets equipped with “Psychologist Package” software were purchased for 68 psychologists (52 women) in Dnipropetrovsk and Poltava oblasts. Since then, 141 people (90 women) – veterans and their families – have already received much-needed psychological assistance provided by these school psychologists.

Activity 2.5.3. Support to community-based reintegration initiatives addressing the specific needs of women and men ex-combatants, including physical and psychological rehabilitation, livelihoods support and reskilling programmes.

Reintegration of veterans at community level and enhancing the capacities of local communities to receive veterans, including those with disabilities, is one of the most requested areas for developmental support in recovery planning and implementation. In Ukraine, CSOs are already implementing a community-oriented approach through veterans’ initiatives, reintegration support programmes, and assistance available to veterans at local level.

During the reporting year, the Project supported 14 initiatives by CSOs, including veterans’ organizations, to enhance reintegration efforts. These grants were designated to organize psychosocial support for veterans and their families, establishing and strengthening veteran centres and hubs, supporting veteran-led initiatives in communities, and providing training to raise awareness on veterans’ issues.

Among the supported initiatives are three projects, financed through Enhancing the Capacity of Civil Society Organizations to Provide the Social Service of Social Adaptation for War Veterans and Their Family Members competition. These projects, being implemented in Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk and Poltava oblasts, focus on building the CSOs’ capacity to provide the social service of adaptation for veterans and their families in cooperation with local self-government bodies. The first stage of the projects focuses on social recovery through recreation centres, providing a structured environment for initial rehabilitation. The second stage shifts to individualized social adaptation at the place of residence. This includes assessing personal needs, assisting in analysing life situations, and developing personalized social adaptation plans. Participants will receive training to enhance communication, social skills, and competences. Furthermore, the project supports self-help and peer-to-peer support groups, facilitates professional training, promotes employment or self-employment opportunities, and helps develop leadership potential. The grant projects target 60 veterans and family members in Chernivtsi and Dnipropetrovsk, and 70 in Poltava.

Furthermore, the Project is also supporting the establishment of a veterans’ hub in Chernihiv, which will include a psychologist’s office, a training room and a gym specifically designed for adaptive sports. Notably, adaptive sports are recognized as one of the most effective methods of mental and physical rehabilitation for veterans. The hub’s premises have been provided by the local authorities and the Project is purchasing necessary construction materials and sports equipment to complete the facility.

Nizhyn: An example of a tailored package of support based on community needs

Nizhyn, a small city with several surrounding satellite rural communities and a total population of 65,000 people, is located in Chernihiv Oblast. The community was attacked by advancing Russian forces in February 2022 and was subsequently under sustained artillery fire and siege until the eventual Russian retreat in April 2022. As a result, the city and surrounding communities sustained significant damage to critical and social infrastructure.

After the siege was lifted, the community attracted a large number of IDPs from Sumy, Luhansk, Donetsk and Kharkiv oblasts. It also has a large number of veterans and their families. The two universities in the city quickly resumed functioning and attracted youth from the surrounding area, but also neighbouring regions.

EU4Recovery provided Nizhyn city with a multi-sectoral package of support, based on inclusive community consultations on needs and priorities, that included capacity strengthening for recovery planning and accountability; support with basic service delivery to vulnerable members of the community; and support for civil society, youth and veteran mobilization and engagement.

The original investment by the previous EU4East project in Nizhyn in 2022 was expanded and deepened by EU4Recovery, with both material support to the Recovery and Development Office and capacity strengthening and training for its staff. Youth Ambassadors were supported to implement activities, targeting youth mobilization and then linked to the Recovery and Development Office to ensure these youth-led initiatives were included in the priorities of the local recovery plan. A Community Security Working Group was established and supported to mobilize the community in a dialogue with police and municipal officials. A Veterans' Hub was established to support reintegration and rehabilitation services for veterans, and an administrative services centre was refurbished and provided with needed equipment to function.

LESSONS LEARNED

Data and analytics

The rolling out of digital systems, such as the Electronic Case Manager, has not only boosted efficiency and service delivery but also allowed data to be shared at all levels of the system — from individual clients to regional service providers, to policymakers at the national level. The data generated by this digital system are collected, analysed, and stored systematically, allowing each client's case to be managed in a more structured manner and to inform national policies on key issues, bottlenecks for service delivery, and gaps.

These data produced at the sub-national level also played a crucial role in evidence-based policy advocacy by UNDP at national level. The analysis of social services in 368 communities across six oblasts (Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Sumy) identified unmet needs and levels of resident satisfaction. Based on these findings, interactive maps of social service provision were developed for each of the target oblasts, along with regional programmes for the further development of social services. The findings informed regional conferences and policy discussions, resulting in the creation and adoption of comprehensive regional social service programmes aligned with national legislation. Additionally, the structures of regional social service administration bodies were updated to expand and add new areas of focus, meeting national legislative requirements. These insights directly shaped regional policies, and the Ministry of Social Policy has since requested similar analyses for the remaining 18 oblasts, highlighting the importance of data-driven approaches in shaping effective, responsive social service systems.

Testing new ideas, conducting pilot projects at local level and then collecting data on the outcomes, provided an evidence base for scalable national initiatives. Presenting pilot outcomes to stakeholders at national level enabled data-driven decision-making and broader implementation. This approach, emphasizing gradual, evidence-based scaling, has proven successful in ensuring that strategies are both effective and sustainable when expanded nationwide.

Capacity of local authorities

The capacity of local authorities to manage and lead the recovery of their communities is critical for the future. Sustained investments in capacity strengthening, transparency, anti-corruption and whistleblowing will continue to be the key to setting a foundation for attracting future recovery investments. The Electronic Document Management Systems provided to authorities is another key element of strengthening accountability and streamlining administrative processes at local level.

Partnership with community organizations and civil society

The design of Project activities was underpinned by consultations with stakeholders and data collection that provided a comprehensive picture of the needs, priorities and opportunities of partner communities. Of note is the creation of “community profiles” and comprehensive assessment of the community and CSOs registered and active in the targeted regions. The information provides comprehensive understanding of the areas of activity and capacity gaps of local civil society, the depth and mechanisms of communication and coordination with local authorities, as well as an understanding of gaps occurring during community engagement and participation, and of the support needed to address these gaps to improve social cohesion and community engagement in recovery and development processes.

Multi-sectoral approach

The goal of EU4Recovery is to implement an effective area-based approach providing tailored solutions for complex recovery challenges in war-affected and frontline communities where people have returned to or stayed in their homes. A critical element to addressing the impact of the war on these communities is also local economic recovery. The lack of an outcome under EU4Recovery focused on local economic recovery challenges the ability to offer holistic solutions to the targeted communities.

Despite this challenge, UNDP has tried to coordinate EU4Recovery with other streams of UNDP-implemented local economic recovery funding, in order to leverage results for the same communities in a coordinated area-based approach. However differing donor timelines and geographic priorities have made this challenging at times. Local economic recovery for war-affected and frontline communities should be included in design of the next phase.

RISKS AND ANALYSIS

- 1 Turnover in the leadership and changes in priorities of the partners (regional and local authorities, and service providers) can affect initiatives started under previous leadership. To mitigate this risk, more flexibility should be provided in changing programmatic activities that still contribute towards strategic objectives.
- 2 Security dynamics and electricity cuts have led to unexpected delays in implementation of project activities. To mitigate disruptions, an extension of the project schedule to March 2025 was critical to accommodate the impact on timelines.
- 3 The continued demographic trend of movement of the population from rural to urban centres is affecting community engagement at sub-national level. Slow progress by the Government of Ukraine at national level in finalizing and implementing the demographic strategy, as well as the 're-centralization' of local self-governance budgets during wartime, are also posing risks to retaining youth in communities. Creating opportunities for youth engagement, education and entertainment is thus critical.
- 4 The conscription of national male team members from partner NGOs and contractors has caused cancellations and delays in some activities, particularly affecting infrastructure projects, due to the shortage of construction workers. A potential mitigation strategy would be extending timelines and promoting reskilling and employment of women in key sectors.
- 5 Rapid inflation can render costed budgets for material goods insufficient within a few months, necessitating frequent revisions and fund reallocations. To mitigate this, it is advisable to budget with a margin to account for potential cost fluctuations, ensuring financial flexibility and contingency amounts.
- 6 Ensuring 100 percent participation of security sector partners in training programmes is difficult because of operational requirements, the frequency of emergencies, police duties, staffing shortages and logistical challenges. To mitigate this risk, training sessions in hybrid mode with smaller numbers of participants should be conducted, and in locations that are logistically convenient.
- 7 The ongoing war and uncertain dynamics often result in changing operational needs among sub-national partners. To build in flexibility it is recommended to allocate sufficient budget lines specifically for contingencies.
- 8 Limited coordination between key national stakeholders – such as the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Economy – on veterans' issues, and the lack of an adopted national strategy on veterans' policy, hampers the ability of the Project to scale up successful sub-national initiatives with the veteran community and their families. The Project should continue sub-national activities to support the veterans' community, their reintegration and identified needs, while continuing to collect data and advocate national policy solutions based on the data and evidence.

