

MATRA PROGRAMME
Application form

BRIEF INFORMATION PROJECT / ORGANISATION

Short name project	Stabilization & recovery in war-hit areas
Full name project	Support to the stabilization and recovery of war affected communities (frontline, return and hosting areas)
Summary project	The project is designed to support return and recovery processes to Sumska Oblast by taking a two-pronged approach that is built around the Humanitarian-Development nexus and aims to support i) in the short term, the continued locally-led response to the crisis, including social stabilization and mending of the social fabric; ii) in the medium term bolster institutions and mechanisms that provide justice, increasing social cohesion and propensity for community-led reintegration of women and men ex-combatants, and support area-based and participatory recovery, thereby addressing residual conflict potential and contributing to increased stability in the conflict affected communities of Ukraine following the end of the military operations.
Name of organisation	United Nations Development Programme
Date of submission of proposal	29.03.2023
Amount in USD	1,578,947.37
Amount in UAH	58,421,052.70 (as per official UN Exchange rate as of 1 August 2023)
Start date	07.08.2023
End date	31.01.2025

POLICY ISSUES

Policy relevance: What national policy objectives will this project contribute to?

Despite the challenges of the ongoing war, Ukraine remains strong and resilient. The central Government has demonstrated extraordinary resilience and capacity in leading and coordinate all crisis response efforts, ensuring sustained public service provision while organising the efforts to restore the country. Meanwhile, the main focus in political and economic life has been and continues to be on the war, implementation of most of the national plans and strategies has slowed down or halted. To ensure a just

and inclusive recovery, there is a continued need for strengthening of key national actors – Government, private sector, and civil society – whose resilience must be bolstered to lead the country from crisis response to recovery. UNDP and other partners have been providing additional support by increasing the number of technical staff as well as through enhancement and re-calibration of existing data and information sharing platforms and tools at both national and oblast levels.

In April 2022 the President of Ukraine issued a decree to establish the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the War, an advisory body tasked with addressing the consequences of the war by advancing the recovery and stabilisation processes at all levels to address the immediate needs and new challenges arising from the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, which started in February 2022. The Council is responsible for the development of the Ukraine Recovery Plan¹, a cross-sectorial action plan for the recovery and development of the country that will streamline the measures for post-war recovery and development of Ukraine, including the renovation of damaged infrastructure, improvement of public service delivery, structural transformation and economic reforms, and support to war-affected women and men. The overall objective of the Recovery Plan goes beyond the restoration of destroyed infrastructure and focuses on profound transformations into a green, just, and prosperous state. The draft plan presented at Ukraine's Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland, in July 2022, includes sets of recovery and modernization parameters for each sector, to be accompanied by a dedicated recovery fund, which will also serve as guidance for recovery planning at the sub-national level. It will include sets of recovery and modernization parameters for each sector and will be accompanied by a dedicated recovery fund. All project outputs herein are aligned with the overarching draft Recovery Plan of Ukraine.

In addition, the Ministry for Communities and Territories Development has elaborated a framework for the integrated rehabilitation of territories and cities. The Recovery and Development Plan will become a blueprint to develop the best possible response to the challenges lying ahead. It will also be a guiding document for area-based recovery and development interventions under this Project. In September 2022 UNDP has signed with the Ministry a Memorandum of Understanding under whose framework UNDP agreed to conduct assessments of war damage to housing, as well as administrative and social infrastructure facilities and to help develop a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) that will visualize, monitor, and provide basic analysis related to recovery sequencing and prioritization. It is expected that this will provide the necessary evidence base for an effective reconstruction process in support of the development of territorial communities. It is worth noticing that Project activities planned under Output 1.2 of this project are also expected to contribute to the reconstruction efforts by increasing transparency and speed of judicial cases connected to war damages.

Further, following Russia's invasion, Ukraine has submitted its application for EU membership. On 23 June 2022, EU member states decided to grant EU candidate status to the country. The path to joining the EU might be long and will require steps to be taken in a number of areas, including strengthening the rule of law, improving human rights, anti-corruption and structural economic reforms². The present Project will contribute to the practical implementation of these priorities in the areas of access to justice, access to services, early recovery, and stabilization in the war-affected areas of Ukraine. Pilot solutions developed with UNDP support will be ready for scaling in other regions of the country.

¹ [URC2022– Recovery plan \(urc-international.com\)](https://www.unc.org/press/2022/04/2022-04-20-urc-international-com)

² <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/Ukraine%20Opinion%20and%20Annex.pdf>

Finally, Project activities are fully in line with the United Nations Transitional Framework (TF) for Ukraine 2022-2023, the strategic document of the United Nations in Ukraine in support of the Government of Ukraine's response to the economic and social impact of Russia's invasion and war against Ukraine.

Rationale: What issue/problem will be addressed by the project?

The complex humanitarian, development, and peace challenges emerging in Ukraine as a consequence of the military aggression of the Russian Federation underscore the importance of delivering programming that prioritises efforts to protect development gains alongside the provision of time-critical assistance. Such assistance must ensure that people can maintain their resilience to shocks to help them manage and recover from the crisis as quickly as possible.

Three significant elements must inform the immediate and medium-term response:

1. Ukraine is not an impoverished, fragile state in a protracted crisis. State capacities and capabilities (institutional, political, technical, organisational) have proven to be adaptable since the early days of the conflict. However, protecting and sustaining these capacities, especially at the local level, for building resilience will be an essential element in responding to the crisis in the immediate and longer-term.
2. Ukraine has high levels of human capital – an educated, dynamic, and entrepreneurial people with high levels of technological expertise and civic engagement, fertile soil, and natural resources to exploit, as well as access to the European markets for the goods and services it produces. Managing and supporting these capacities in light of significant displacement must be a priority to ensure that Ukraine and Ukrainians can lead the response to the impacts of the current crisis.³
3. The war has so far strengthened, not weakened, Ukrainian identity and social cohesion. Communities across Ukraine have welcomed and assisted those displaced from the war-affected areas, in a display of collective solidarity that is both humbling and inspiring. The current crisis presents an opportunity to further strengthen the role of civil society, who have played a critical role in the crisis response, and local authorities/public institutions to maintain and strengthen social cohesion in Ukraine for the future. Even so, mass internal displacement may bring new challenges to fragile, war-affected communities, with the potential for tensions between the residents of host communities and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) requiring shelter and access to overwhelmed public services.

Addressing the drivers and impact of conflict in eastern Ukraine and beyond, supporting stabilisation, greater social cohesion and access to justice remain a key strategic commitment of UNDP and will require that: a) justice institutions provide inclusive and quality justice services that are anchored to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights, and b) communities are equipped with skills and included in relevant formats to identify immediate response and recovery priorities, as well as mitigate security and safety risks. It also requires that authorities as duty bearers are equipped to promote, protect,

³ It is essential that specific focus is placed on ensuring safe and dignified return of displaced women, men, and children to their areas of origin, to harness their potential as agents of change and engines for recovery and reconstruction. Similarly, the need for reintegration of ex-combatants and veterans will present itself in advance of the end of the active hostilities and will require that every effort is made to preserve the human capital they represent, to avoid stigmatization and criminalization of this specific target group, and to ensure that tailored mental and physical health support to is in place to address issues of war-related disability and war related trauma.

and fulfil human rights for all, while ensuring rights holders, including women and youth and vulnerable groups, such as IDP's and ex-combatants, the space and capacities for advocacy and participation in decision making.

For communities to better mitigate security and safety risks and potentially increase stability in the region, they require space, capacities, and resources for dialogue and to address local challenges and tensions that may be brewing as a result of the displacement and return processes, as well as due to the hardship that the war is indiscriminately placing on lives and livelihoods.

At the same time, the rapidly evolving context, and the newly arising needs across all oblasts of Ukraine require initiating and rapidly scaling up crisis response activities that strengthen national and local capacities to protect and maintain development gains and strengthen the resilience of crisis-affected communities. Urgent action is required to ensure that public institutions and civil society have the capacity and resources to maintain and strengthen the social fabric, uphold human rights, and ensure the inclusion, protection, and empowerment of all, including population groups with intersecting and multiple vulnerabilities.

Why does the project help to address the issue/problem?

The effective functioning of the complex system of service provision at national, sub-national and community level, during and in the aftermath of the ongoing war, is critical in building a sense of security, establishing mutual trust and sense of belonging between the citizenry and representatives of the State. Equally essential is they upholding the rule of law in respect of human rights and providing access to legal advice and justice services for fair and equitable hearing and redress of war-related crimes; Responding to this, the project will support establishment of dialogue platforms and channels for community-wide consultation and decision-making on issues related to safety and security and recovery planning and development. This will ensure inclusion and boost engagement of individuals and groups at the intersection of multiple dimensions of vulnerability, in establishing the basis for trustful interaction and cooperation, and renew the social contract between citizens and the State - both before and after the cessation of hostilities and the return of the population to their communities.

Increasing the capacities of communities to respond and recover from external shocks will be instrumental to strengthening the country's social fabric and improving community resilience in the face of attempts at destabilization and disunity brought about by the compound threats of disinformation and conflict.

The project's approach aims to unlock the inner development potential of the community by fostering synergies between local residents and authorities, to ultimately strengthen the collective ability to i) respond effectively and in an inclusive manner to challenges arising during and as a consequence of the return and recovery process and ii) collaborate to enhance the community development process.

In so doing, the project aims to drive change through the following logic:

- **If** Ukrainian communities receive the necessary support, technical and methodological, to discover and unlock their development potential to build institutions representative of all social groups and strengthen their agency at local and subnational levels, **THEN**
- The social capital of the community will be strengthened by inclusive and sustainable institutional mechanisms and platforms for effective dialogue and trust building between citizens and their associations and key local stakeholders (local authorities, security providers, private sector) based on the principles of inclusiveness, participation, and equal partnership, **so that**

- ✓ Communities will have increased capacities and readiness to respond effectively, in a coordinated manner, and taking into account the needs of vulnerable groups, to the challenges in the field of community security as well as strengthened social resilience to drive sustainable local development.

Within UNDP's overall area-based development approach to resilience and recovery, a number of important cross-cutting approaches will be applied to project implementation:

- i. UNDP will support **active engagement of target communities** in medium-term inclusive and participatory planning of resilience and recovery activities through: i) strengthening capacities for dialogue and civic engagement with a specific focus on the role of IDPs/returnees, young women and men and veterans of both sexes in recovery of host communities; ii) creation of "Recovery Working Groups" at community level to support participatory needs identification, joint recovery planning and implementation of community-led initiatives; iii) capacity development through engagement with vulnerable groups and the NGOs who represent their interests, and local authorities to participatorily develop local and regional strategies and programme on improving community security and support the recovery process.
- ii. The project addresses the gendered impacts of the war and ensures a strong focus on **gender equality and women's empowerment**. It promotes women's leadership and participation in decision-making processes, building on UNDP's longstanding support to women in parliament, civil society, and community-based organizations. It will ensure women's and girls' equitable access to basic needs and administrative, legal, medical, and psycho-social services, and livelihood support. The Project will work to combat adverse gender and social norms and will reinforce women's voice and participation in decision-making on an equal footing with men.

Contextual analysis

Who is/are the target group(s) and why?

Based on its longstanding presence in the country, UNDP benefits from on-going cooperation with the Government of Ukraine at all levels, as well as long-standing partnership with numerous networks of civil society organizations that can provide UNDP and development partners with well-established entry points and platforms to channel and scale up service provision.

Institutional Beneficiaries:

- National, subnational, and local administrations;
- Territorial Communities (TCs);
- Community based organizations, civil society organizations, citizen initiative groups, including youth, women, and ex-combatant's self-help groups.

The **final beneficiaries** are conflict affected populations at large, including women, youth, elderly, ex-combatants, and other vulnerable groups (including for example people with disabilities) and civil society organizations, and residents in general.

During the inception period, exact hromadas targeted by the Project will be identified based on needs assessments that will ascertain the concentration of IDP/returnees and veterans in the wider area, the reported presence of intra-community tensions, buy-in of local authorities and readiness to engage in

community mobilization models and the presence of other UNDP activities in the same area that could complement the planned project action.

Beneficial spill over effects from project activities are expected to reach communities and oblasts neighbouring the areas of implementation. Anecdotal evidence from project experience in eastern oblasts of Ukraine show that the introduction of principles of good governance, community mobilization and empowerment initiatives, and strengthening service provision in one target community encourages the neighbouring areas to imitate the initiatives being implemented by development partners. On several occasions, members of neighbouring communities have sought to observe in the meetings of the Community Security and Social Cohesion Working groups to better understand and replicate the methodology being introduced.

Finally, it is expected that the Project might have an influence on populations initially resident in the implementation areas and currently displaced within or outside Ukraine: the assistance planned as part of the Project is likely to encourage the process of return or even relocation from other areas, in response to the recovery initiatives being implemented.

As the Project will strategically focus on empowering especially the most marginalized groups (i.e., people with disabilities, IDPs in their location of displacement and returnees, disenfranchised youth including juvenile offenders, ex-combatants and their families, etc.) to take an active role in community-level dialogue and decision making, these are expected to benefit most from project activities.

IDPs and returnees are among the most vulnerable groups in Ukraine: the prolonged displacement has taken a hard toll on their financial means, and many are pushed towards their return areas despite the prevailing insecurity due to having exhausted their savings. IDPs are disproportionately women and children and elderly, as men of working age are engaged in combat operations as part of the Ukrainian Armed Forces or Territorial Defence Units. IDPs and returnees are more likely to report having lived through traumatic experiences (including direct experience of shelling or occupation). For this reason, communities with high presence of IDPs and returnees will be given priority for support under the project.

The veteran community is another key focus of the activities throughout this Project: even before the escalation of military action in February 2022, many ATO/JFO women and men veterans in Ukraine faced significant challenges in their return to a civilian identity, ranging from economic and social reintegration, access to mental health support, administrative and bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining access to services, and finding a space within their communities and social networks. Veterans have been found to be at increased risk of social exclusion, economic insecurity, and mental health issues⁴. SCORE results dating back to the pre-war period, show that veterans on average experienced higher levels of aggression compared to our community groups, and that women veterans were more likely than average to experience depression. While recent data collected through the SCORE-inspired Holistic Assessment of Resilience of the Population (SHARP)⁵ highlights the significant increase in the level of trust that Ukrainians across age, gender, and social dimensions place on the Ukrainian Armed Forces (SHARP score for the indicator “Trust in the Ukrainian Army” is 9.6 out of 10 nationwide), nevertheless in smaller and more rural hromadas veterans – especially if living with a disability - are expected to face higher levels of

⁴ “Reintegrating ATO & JFO Veterans (January 2022)” <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/reintegrating-ato-jfo-veterans-january-2022>

⁵ Unpublished – expected date of publication of the report April 2023

unemployment and to be more likely to be perceived as a threat rather than as a resource for the community.

Recipients of capacity development support will self-select through competitive call for applications, with the project committing to proactive targeting of youth-led and veterans-oriented organizations.

Beneficiaries of mental health support will self-select based on needs. The project will ensure that awareness raising of available services is implemented, specifically targeting youth centres, collective centres for IDPs, (physical) rehabilitation centres, geriatric centres and any other locations where particularly vulnerable individuals are most likely to gather or reside.

The community mobilization model places the communities themselves at the centre of the project action. Through mobilization and dialogue platforms, they are capacitated to identify problems and locally owned solutions. All community recovery initiatives financed under the project will be identified and implemented through these participatory mechanisms to ensure local ownership and buy-in the development solution.

Who are the other main stakeholders?

The following stakeholders have been identified as being important for successful implementation and for enabling national ownership of the project deliverables.

Stakeholders that Contribute to Implementation at Institutional Level and Ensure the Relevance of Programming:

- Subnational state administrations; local authorities and self-government bodies, incl. municipal and hromada levels in frontline; civil society sector, incl. CSOs networks, associations, advisory bodies;
- Ministries and other central executive bodies (together with their branches at the subnational and local level), incl. the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories; Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development; Ministry of Veterans Affairs; Ministry of Social Policy; Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, State Judiciary Administration of Ukraine, and the Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy.

To what extent have stakeholders been involved in formulating the project proposal?

The Project builds on strong partnerships created by UNDP at subnational level with Oblast Administrations, territorial communities and civil-military administrations, civil society partners, private sector, and other key stakeholders in the eastern oblast of Ukraine; and on lessons learned from several years of implementation of project initiatives in conflict areas along the 2014 'line of contact' across Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, and along the Sea of Azov coastline.

Active engagement of subnational actors is a pre-requisite for the success of the activities planned under the Project: for this reason, the selection of target communities will take into consideration both the opportunity for synergies with ongoing UNDP-implemented outputs and activities, with initiatives being financed by other development partners including but not limited to UN Agencies and international humanitarian and development partners, and the interest expressed by subnational stakeholders to

engage in the model and approaches upon which the Project is founded. Activities envisioned under this project organically build on existing UNDP initiatives being implemented in Sumska oblast by the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme, and specifically in support to local governance mechanisms, and social service provision. Such activities, that were initiated in late 2022 through competitive selection of target hromadas around the oblast, constitute the entry point for the activities envisioned under this Project, as well as their natural complement with a view to strengthen institutional capacities for recovery planning and quality service provision.

Partners at the sub-national level will be further engaged into project activities taking a whole-of-community/whole-of-society approach whose cornerstone is the UNDP tested model for community mobilization and engagement and aims at creating the precondition for inclusive and participatory recovery and development including through project implementation. Dialogue platforms, channels, and tools will be set up at amalgamated community and oblast level to provide the basis for the subnational engagement in project activities. These groups will be the diverse and inclusive platform to empower subnational stakeholders to stay in the driving seat of project implementation, and to identify locally led and locally owned solutions to achieve the overall objective of the Project.

Further, to ensure alignment of objectives and coordination between UNDP and other international and national NGOs also engaged in community-level support, regular dialogue and exchanges have been taking place to compare the community engagement methodologies in use to the benefit of both parties. The same applies to support and technical assistance provided to security actors and ex-combatants: the community-based reintegration model used to address the specific needs of the latter group have been object of exchange and mutual learning with UN agencies including but not limited to the International Organization of Migration (IOM), and other international development partners such as the Folke-Bernadotte Academy and the Elman Peace and Human Rights Center; while in the area of community policing, opportunities for learning and exchange are actively sought through sectoral working groups and bilateral engagement with other donor sponsored initiatives.

Is the intervention aimed at a specific geographical location, and if so, why?

The project will be chiefly implemented in Sumska Oblast, as one of the oblasts which was severely hit by damage and destruction since the beginning of the February 2022 military offensive and was temporarily under occupation. According to the information collected in autumn 2022 through the SCORE-inspired Holistic Assessment of Resilience of the Population (SHARP) (unpublished – expected date of publication of the report April 2023), residents of the Sumy oblast have a lower sense of personal safety in their everyday life as compared to the national average (aggregated personal safety score is 4.7 in Sumy Oblast vs. 5.0 national average across Ukraine; both scales are from 0 to 10).

As per information collected as part of round 20 of the Ukraine — Area Baseline Assessment (Raion Level) conducted by IOM, as of the end of January 2023, 69,126 IDPs are present across Sumska oblast – a number that is stable over time. At the same time, UNHCR's report Lives on hold: Profiles and intentions of internally displaced persons in Ukraine (February 2023) highlights that regardless of the hardship caused by the winter weather, by the challenges caused by extensive damage made to key service infrastructure, including for the distribution and generation of water and energy, and by the threats to personal safety from the ongoing conflict and security threats, 12 per cent of the Ukrainians interviewed by the survey plan to return to their areas of origin on a permanent basis within the next three months.

Understandably, intentions to return are strongly influenced by the fluidity of the security situation and on whether the hromadas of origin are currently under the temporary military control of the Russian Federation. The same source of information highlights how the return process in the spring months may show significant numbers of individuals to move towards northern oblasts, especially in areas where the overall security situation is relatively stable. Across Sumska oblast, 67 per cent of houses are reported to be intact, a strong enabling factor for the return as housing constitutes one of the key pull factors for the intention to return⁶.

Enabling factors for the activities envisioned under the project are the general sense of connectedness between local residents: across Sumska oblast the absolute majority (94 per cent) of the respondents to the SHARP survey stated they can rely on their neighbours for help if they have a serious problem; further, one third of the residents of the oblast shows a high sense of agency – 36 per cent believe that ordinary people can change anything in their community if they try. The oblast also presents a much lower than average existence of tensions between IDP and host communities as captured by the SHARP assessment results. This resilience of the community cooperation bonds and the sense of agency of oblast dwellers provide a strong foundation for launching community mobilization processes to enable return and recovery initiatives that may show quick results and impact.

Further, the Sumska oblast administration has in the second half of 2022 launched an oblast-level strategy for the post-war reconstruction of the region that provides a conceptual framework for bridging the humanitarian phase with the return to development pathways through early recovery initiatives. The local administration has shown a keen interest in pursuing a cooperation with UNDP on Durable Solutions for Displacement and to implement Humanitarian-Development Nexus approaches to enable the return and recovery process.

Amongst the factors identified as potential challenges and at the same time key issues to be addressed by the project is the slightly lower than national average trust in local institutions (SHARP trust in local institutions score in Sumska oblast is 6.1 against average 6.3, both out of 10); also of note is that access to services and essential goods, employment opportunities and job creation are known to be key elements that will influence the overall success of the return process in hromadas that have experienced temporary military occupation. In light of the above, the project has been designed to create the enabling environment, in the form of 1) community-level systems and mechanisms to plan and implement locally led and locally owned initiatives; 2) increased institutional and citizen capacities for dialogue and collaboration; and 3) improved justice service provision; that will underpin the return and recovery process in target hromadas. The project will make a deliberate effort to draw into project activities young women and men, ensuring they become actively and meaningfully engaged in the community-level dialogue and planning; the same deliberate effort will be made to ensure that women and men demobilizing from the frontline are supported to reintegrate in their community of origin in a way that recognizes and addresses their very specific needs and priorities.

Added value

⁶ A strong correlation exists between the housing condition in the area of origin and the intention to return as highlighted by both UNHCR and IOM sources.

What is the added value of the Dutch government being involved in relation to other donors, the EU, NGOs, and local authorities?

For its implementation, the Project will be fully integrated into the **UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP)**, supported by 11 donors, and partially implemented by four UN agencies, under UNDP's coordination and overall oversight. This will allow for the maximization of resources as well as access to complementarities and synergies under numerous other initiatives with multiple other donors and development partners. Specifically, this project will be integrated in the Community Security and Social Cohesion component of the overall programme.

The RPP is an integral component of the UNDP Country Programme and is therefore fully aligned with the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPF). It is part of the Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding Portfolio (IDRPB), which is closely interlinked with the Democratic Governance and Energy & Environment Portfolios of UNDP, operating nationally and in all of Ukraine's regions and is consistent with the SDGs, in particular SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment).

Its anchoring within the RPP, will ensure that the Dutch Government contribution to response and recovery processes in project target areas are fully complementary to those being implemented through other donor contributions earmarked for area-based recovery and development in Ukraine, and that the design of project activities build on lessons learned by UNDP in war affected areas, and specifically initiatives at the intersection of governance, security, and human rights issues. At the same time, thanks to the close inter-portfolio collaboration established within UNDP particularly in the area of support to women and men demobilizing, temporarily or permanently, from the frontlines, the Dutch Government assistance will be actively contributing to national reform processes already underway, such as decentralisation, justice reform, law enforcement, and anticorruption.

Activities included in this Project proposal organically build on the successful results of the collaboration between the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and UNDP over the course of 2019-2022, especially in the area of community mobilization for security and social cohesion, in the area of access to justice, including through digitalization processes, and as part of community-led reintegration efforts aiming to facilitate the transition into civilian lives for women and men demobilizing temporarily or permanently from the frontline. In this last area the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has been UNDP's key development partners and the keenest promoter of initiatives that harnessed the potential and capacities of the veteran community to implement social initiatives for the benefit of their hromadas; for the establishment of a peer-to-peer mentorship programme that will now form the basis of a country-wide initiative led by the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine to establish veteran mentors at subnational (rayon) level; and to boost the capacity of the Ministry itself to provide service that are fully responsive to the specific needs of women and men veteran.

The Project can rely on the global UNDP experience in the reintegration of ex-combatants, which is guided by the Integrated Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Standards, and on the fruitful collaborative relationship established i) with the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine; ii) with civil society organizations led by veterans or advocating for the needs and priorities of the veteran communities; and

iii) with other actors working in the area of Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants⁷.

The Project's targeting of Sumska oblast, where so far community security and social cohesion activities are not financed by other donor cost sharing agreements, will ensure no duplication of the planned initiatives. At the same time, UNDP is actively engaging with local self-government bodies in Sumska oblast to support restoration and recovery of public service provision, both administrative and social, and to build local administration's capacities to design and implement local recovery plans in line with the priorities identified in the Ukraine National Recovery Plan. It follows, that the initiatives envisioned by the project and financed by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, will be seamlessly complementing initiatives aiming to strengthen service provision and medium-term recovery planning.

To what extent is your organisation making an own contribution in the activity?

The project will be implemented by UNDP under the Direct Implementation Modality, which places on UNDP the full responsibility for the results to be achieved by the project. UNDP may contract one or more Responsible Parties to implement specific activities envisioned by the project, or finance through a small grant pool service provision via civil society partners or specific initiatives identified by the target hromadas that are instrumental to achieve the results and objectives envisioned by the project.

The community mobilization approach and methodology used adopted for Project implementation draws on UNDP's global experience in area-based and people centred development, as well as years of testing within conflict affected areas in Ukraine. The full guidance can be found [here](#) (Ukrainian only).

UNDP intends to contract an expert Civil Society partner to support the community mobilization efforts in Sumska oblast. In so doing, UNDP intends to firmly root at local level the community mobilization methodology and principles, to ensure sustainability of results after the end of the project.

Project activities are in full alignment with the UNDP Country Programme Document for Ukraine (2018-2023), to the UNDP Ukraine Resilience Building and Recovery Framework, and to the United Nations Transitional Framework (TF) for assistance to Ukraine 2022-2023. They are also firmly anchored in the [UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#).

Lessons learned

What lessons learned (from previous or comparable activities, published evaluations, relevant publications) will be addressed by your organisation?

As an area-based programme specifically developed for the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine, the RPP has accumulated a wealth of experience in addressing key stabilization, peacebuilding, economic and governance priority needs in eastern Ukraine following the start of the 2014 conflict. Following the sudden escalation of military activities in February 2022, and the corresponding increase of urgent needs in conflict-affected communities, transit hubs, and host communities, the UN RPP has scaled up its support to address the negative impact of the war in areas adjacent to oblasts it was previously designed to

⁷ Close coordination and collaboration are ongoing, for example, with the International Organization on Migration (IOM) to support reintegration processes of veterans to communities, establishing veterans' development centers and psychological support, and with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) focusing on capacity development of the national level partners and policy makers.

support, and in oblasts where IDPs from the east of Ukraine had displaced to, in line with UNDP's overall commitment to preserve development gains as fully as possible and to return Ukraine to pathways achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as quickly as possible.

Enhanced communication, cooperation and partnership between local authorities and communities should continue to be fostered via the establishing dialogue platforms and formats such as Community Security Working Groups (CSWGs) and advocacy groups, as well as other dialogue meetings. These mechanisms proved to be effective and sustainable to mobilize community members to address the most pressing security issues in their settlements. The dialogue platforms will enable the local decision-makers to capture the different needs of all community members, including from vulnerable groups, and to tailor the recovery response to the flagged community issues in the local policies, making them more gender-responsive and inclusive.

UNDP Ukraine's cooperation with the Free Legal Aid Coordination Center, which started back in 2011, when the system was just launched, through the UNDP initiatives on legal empowerment for the poor. Starting from 2014 cooperation with the Free Legal Aid was expanded to promote the rule of law and access to justice in the conflict-affected territories, integration of IT solutions to legal services provision and formulation of background for alternative dispute resolution. On 16 March 2021, UNDP and the Free Legal Aid Coordination Center institutionalized their partnership by signing the Memorandum of Understanding aimed at ensuring sustainable and inclusive access to justice and legal empowerment.⁸ Following the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine, access to justice in remote settlements reduced significantly. In view of this, the respective interventions should be performed, including technical assistance, to enable FLAS lawyers to render their services to all war-affected people, including via digital communication means, reaching the most vulnerable women and men.

UNDP Ukraine's extensive experience from social cohesion programming within the United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP), which has been implemented by four United Nations agencies: UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, and FAO since 2015. The Project will build directly on the previous efforts, ongoing work and methodology of the Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Groups (CSWG's), a community mobilization tool with the purpose of combining efforts in improving community security and social cohesion in areas affected by the armed conflict through inclusive planning, as well as exploring issues of early recovery and return to development pathways. Today, there are 59 active CSWG's established across eight regions of Ukraine - Donetsk (GCA and relocated groups), Zaporizhia (GCA and displaced from NGCA), Zhytomyr, Luhansk (displaced from NGCA), Kherson (GCA and displaced from NGCA), Chernihiv, Poltava, and Dnipropetrovsk⁹. The methodology of working groups, developed and tested in Ukrainian communities that have experienced post-conflict reconstruction, allows to involve the maximum number of stakeholders in this process, creating prerequisites for the co-creation of a safe environment and strengthening the social fabric.

⁸ The FLA system, managed by the Free Legal Aid Provision Coordination Centre (FLACC) under the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine (MoJ) is one of the most comprehensive governance entities nationally, incorporating 23 Regional Legal Aid Centres (RLACs), 84 Local Legal Aid Centres (LLACs), 431 Regional Legal Aid Bureaus (RLABs), two specialized call centers and five legal awareness and promotion "PRAVOKATOR" centers. The FLA system employs over 1 500 lawyers, has contracts with 7 500 more attorneys who are on standby for deployment. The FLA-system has taken the lead in providing legal services in wartime throughout Ukraine.

⁹ Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Groups originally created in Donetsk (GCA) and Luhansk (GCA) oblasts have for the most part relocated to other areas of Ukraine but remain actively engaged in supporting IDPs from their hromadas in places of their current relocation, as well as maintain linkages with the residents left in areas under temporary occupation.

UNDP Ukraine's long-term support to youth engagement in Ukraine, including to the Ministry of Youth and Sports for reform of the youth policy since 2014. UNDP was active in the design and adoption of all major policy documents, including the State Regulation on the Youth Worker Programme, the Law on Basic Principles of Youth Policy, the National Youth Strategy 2030, and the State Target Social Programme "Youth of Ukraine 2025". In 2021, the subnational authorities were strengthened to update subnational youth programmes in accordance with the National Programme "Youth of Ukraine 2021-2025". In close partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, UNDP has continued to provide expertise and organizational support for the development and implementation of the Youth Worker Programme, including development of social cohesion component, which has become an integral part of the State Target Social Programme Youth of Ukraine 2021-2025. Since 2019, UNDP Ukraine has supported several projects and had a strong delivery in the development for increased participation of youth in decision making processes on a national level and continued to support youth engagement and civic activism on a community level aiming to promote the need for national unity and social cohesion in Ukraine.

Recognizing the need to ramp up the inclusion of young people in Ukraine's recovery process, UNDP has since February 2022 supported several processes, which the proposed project will build upon.

In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Volyn Youth Platform and Ukrainian Association of Youth Councils, UNDP organized a series of youth dialogues during the summer 2022, where young people exchanged experiences and discussed the role of young people in humanitarian and recovery efforts and vision of the role of young people in their community and the larger recovery process of Ukraine. The youth dialogues were organized together with youth councils (local and regional level), considering their roles as advisory bodies to the local self-governance structure, which also linked representatives of youth CSOs, volunteers, active young citizens with representatives of local councils and administrations.

To better understand the needs and experiences about the war's impact on youth, UNDP jointly with UNFPA has during the fall 2022 conducted nationwide research, which will avail data on youth perceptions vital for future programming for youth engagement as well as support the Government of Ukraine in the implementation of the National Recovery Plan.

Partnering with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in 2022 UNDP also supported the pilot phase of the VidNova initiative – a Youth exchange Programme, which engages young men and women in rebuilding war-affected communities through exchange visits to different parts of Ukraine and educational components promoting social cohesion and dialogue on the national civic identity.

The overall results of these initiatives demonstrate that youth are more engaged comparing to before February 2024; they are willing to engage in the recovery process ahead, and that there is a tremendous opportunity right now to channel this engagement.

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

What are the main activities? Describe briefly.

The project will be articulated around three key objectives:

- I. Support local early recovery and facilitate dignified returns to war-affected areas through the implementation of community-led and needs-responsive recovery processes.

- II. Strengthen the social fabric at community level through the establishment and operationalization of mechanisms for dialogue, local cooperation, and veteran integration into community life.
- III. Enable inclusive planning and implementation of security and recovery initiatives at subnational and community level.

What are the main OUTPUTS (services and products) that will be delivered through the project? Describe briefly.

Output 1.1 Community-driven response to the crisis is enabled and supported through capacity development of CSOs, initiative groups, volunteer groups on restorative practices for mental health and through MHPSS service provision for key vulnerable groups.

As part of Output 1.1 the Project will seek to build and/strengthen capacities at the hromada level to respond to the challenges brought by the war and support the mental health of individuals and communities as a key building block of the return and recovery process.

Specifically, the Project will achieve these objectives through the following activities and initiatives:

Support Mental Health and Psychosocial Support service provision for civic activists, frontline workers, and civil servants.

The war in Ukraine undoubtedly created new challenges and hardship for all Ukrainians regardless of their sex, age or pre-existing vulnerabilities: necessities that had so far been considered easy to meet (safe shelter, basic healthcare, education, to say a few) have become a challenge to fulfil: as a consequence of military action more than five million people had to leave their homes, become separated from loved ones, in some cases have taken the difficult decision to return to their communities of origin where they are struggling to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. Almost the entire population of Ukraine lives in a situation of unceasing stress and persistent sense of unsafety, which generally has a negative impact on mental health of individuals and of the community as a whole. In addition to the constant threat of physical injuries during the war, many Ukrainians experience psychological injuries. This is especially relevant for women, men, children living in the Sumska oblast, which has constantly been object of military action since February 24th, 2022. In order to lay solid foundations for the return and recovery process to take place, ensuring mental health support at community and individual level is of key relevance. For this reason, the Project will specifically target public activists and volunteers who are engaged in the humanitarian response and who have been exposed to psychological hardship and trauma as part of their selfless work. Based on successful piloting of this activity in other oblasts of eastern Ukraine, a practical education program "Restorative practices for public activists and volunteers of the Sumy region" will be offered to build the capacities of participants to overcome chronic stress, to lay the foundation for a culture of mental health care, to learn to recognize the signs of professional burnout and to acquire an "algorithm" for recovery.

Capacity development for mental health professionals, social workers, GPs, employment officers, etc. (the first responders) to tailor guidance and service provision to the specific needs of ex-combatants and their families, including through adaptation of state-of-the art medical practices for mental health support.

Further, in order to support sustainable and community-led mechanisms for mental health support at community level, the Project will engage with school psychologists in target hromadas in Sumska oblast where, due to the distance from the big cities and from the oblast administrative centre, these mental

health professionals are the only available and qualified individuals to provide small communities with primary psychological assistance. The Project will offer selected professionals of both genders capacity strengthening and professional development opportunities in the form of innovative methods for psychological first aid, drawn on international best practices. The project will also join the trainees in a professional network focused on addressing the mental health needs of people with disabilities, families of veterans and other vulnerable people living in these communities.

Further, to promote digital solutions for mental health service provision even under circumstances where access to the internet, mobile communication, and electricity may be a challenge, the participants to the capacity building activities will also receive hardware and software tools to complement and reinforce the new knowledge and skills. A software suite – the “Psychologist's Package” – that will provide the mental health professionals with access to advanced methodological materials on psychosomatic techniques, will be installed on tablets to aide them in the performance of their professional activities.

Output 1.2 Enhanced crisis response and capacity of justice system to ensure need-responsive service provision, and improved awareness of legal services for war affected populations.

Under this output the Project will enhance capacities of Free Legal Aid System (FLAS) and judiciary to provide needs-responsive, effective, accessible, and sustainable legal services to the groups most at risk of being left behind¹⁰ within the context of the armed conflict, including through the use of digital tools.

The focus of interventions will be on two specific war-affected groups:

- Veterans and their family members.
- Those who have lost their housing property due to the military action.

Notably at the time of writing there is no available assessment and/or data analysis on the legal needs of the veterans and their family members. Nevertheless, issues of social protection and other state-guaranteed services are the subject of intense media attention and public consideration. In line with consultations with stakeholders and partners, there is a clear need to expand/strengthen the level of awareness of and accessibility to legal services among the veterans and their family members. Although information on the exact number of veterans expected to return and returning from the active military service to communities is not at present shared by the Government of Ukraine due to security considerations, it is safe to assume this number to be increased drastically compared to the pre-war situation. Filling the data gap and the lack of data analysis on the current legal needs of such a big and special group of the population as veterans and their family members would be instrumental to enable evidence-based further interventions the Project.

Further, in response to the significant level of destruction to civilian public and private infrastructure, court cases that involve assessments and validation of damages have already started to rise significantly. At present, no unified registry of official expert damage assessment and evaluation exist to streamline the work of the courts that are involved in hearing such cases, and this generates delays in the justice process since judges have to officially request the relevant paperwork to be sent to the relevant court from different locations across Ukraine. The State Judicial Administration has reached out to UNDP at the end of 2022 to request support in setting up a unified and electronically accessible platform and repository for all these expertise, that may be at the same time accessible to all relevant parties.

¹⁰ i.e., IDPs, women, pensioners, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.

To address these identified needs the Project intends to implement the following activities and pilot initiatives¹¹:

Assessment of the legal needs of the veterans and their family members.

The results of the assessment will be used by the Project for further programming, by the Free Legal Aid System for more targeted planning, and by other relevant legal services providers. To allow for identification of trends and a level of generalization of the results, this assessment will be organized in Sumy, Chernihiv and Kharkiv oblasts.

Support to veterans and their family members

The Project will provide support to veterans and their family members through provision of legal services and awareness raising activities, with the view to address issues of the social protection and, to some extent, enable the reintegration of veterans in their communities.

Support digitalization of legal services

To harness the benefits of digitalization for the creation of a database of damaged property through the development of the “eZbytky”¹² register. The register will become a repository of all damaged property official evaluation papers around Ukraine, and the access will be granted for all judges upon authentication. This solution would significantly shorten the trial time for all the parties and improve accessibility and quality of justice service provision for war affected individuals through electronic document management.

Output 2.1 The Community Mobilization for Community Security and Social Cohesion (CSSC) methodology is expanded to promote civic engagement and dialogue as tools for community stabilization and recovery.

An area-based and community-led approach is at the core of the Project strategy and is mainstreamed throughout the design and the implementation of all Project activities. The cornerstone of the approach is the introduction of the community mobilization for security and social cohesion methodology, a programmatic approach that works at the intersection of human security, human development and state-building and help ensure coherent interventions that enhance at local level security and social cohesion in crisis contexts. The emphasis of this multi-sectoral programming is placed on ensuring that communities are ‘free from fear’ and, by addressing socio-economic issues that may have an impact on physical security, also ‘free from want’.

The Project will bring together a wide range of local state, private sector, and civil society actors to reach a common understanding of the causes and drivers of insecurity and tensions within the community and to develop a coordinated, locally led response to them and to the broader issues connected with the return and recovery processes. It will employ participatory assessments, planning and accountability as tools towards the improvement of service delivery, reduction of inter-group tension, and enhancement of democratic participation into the life of the community.

¹¹ A grant modality could be used for some of the activities’ implementation.

¹² “eZbytky” loosely translates into “The Electronic Damages.”

Specific activities that will be implemented under this Output are detailed below.

Introduction of community mobilization for CSSC methodology to new target locations and support introduction of participatory assessment and inclusive governance principles.

UNDP will support the expansion of its existing network of Community Security and Social Cohesion Working Groups (CSWGs) in Sumska oblast. The community working group model, launched by UNDP in 2017 as a community mobilization tool for enhanced community security and social cohesion (in its vertical and horizontal dimensions at the local level in areas affected by the armed conflict, remains a valid and scalable tool for the creation of dialogue platforms around security issues within a community, with the potential to expand to cover wider recovery topics. The inclusiveness of the platform is a key strategic advantage to ensure a whole-of-community understanding of priorities for (early) recovery and return to development pathways. In recognition of such potential, CSWG's will be developed into Community Security and Recovery Working Groups, to underline the wider mandate of these community-led bodies in the current context. This approach aims to unlock the inner development potential of the community by fostering synergies between local residents (in the current context including both host communities, returnees, and IDPs) and authorities, to ultimately strengthen the collective ability to i) respond effectively and in an inclusive manner to challenges in the area of community security and ii) collaborate to enhance the community development process. Today, there are 63 active CSWGs across eight regions - Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Zhytomyr, Luhansk, Kherson, Chernihiv, Dnipro, and Poltava. All the CSWGs are acting in the Government controlled areas of Ukraine. Community Security Working Groups from the territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts, which are temporary not under control of the Government of Ukraine but continue to carry out their activities in the hosting communities of Ukraine, are identified by the name of the communities, where they were initially founded.

The methodology of the working groups, developed and tested in Ukrainian communities that have experienced post-conflict reconstruction, ensure conflict sensitivity and a do no harm approach, and allows to involve the maximum number of stakeholders in this process, creating prerequisites for the co-creation of a safe environment and strengthening the social fabric. Continuous capacity enhancement of the new groups will take place throughout the implementation period, including through peer exchanges between existing and new groups, capacity development with the focus on introducing tools for participatory assessment and principles of inclusive governance in target hromadas and on the promotion of a dialogue approach to mitigating potential security threats.

Promote the advocacy role of CSSC working groups/recovery working groups open dialogue platforms, empowering citizens across the vulnerability spectrum to influence local level decisions, policies, and regulations.

In close coordination with relevant stakeholders engaged in recovery planning at the national and subnational (including hromada) levels¹³, the Project will strengthen capacities of Community Security and Recovery Working Groups (both in hromadas and federated at oblast level) in human rights-based advocacy, inclusive recovery, and development. The support provided will enable the Working Groups to feed fully into the community (early) recovery and development planning, including, as appropriate, through the creation of community-level liaison mechanisms with the veteran community, through women led organizations, through IDP groups or through the strengthening of existing youth

¹³ This includes but is not limited to ongoing UNDP initiatives in support to the recovery planning and implementation efforts of the Government of Ukraine, line Ministries, local self-government bodies, etc.

infrastructure – thus linking organically to Project activities envisioned under Outputs 2.2, 2.3, and under Outcome 3.

The activity will be implemented based on UNDP's existing curricula for capacity development of civil society organizations but adapted to the realities of the local context and the changed development profile of the hromadas to ensure a flexible and area-driven approach. Based on evidence resulting from participatory assessments and CSOs' mapping, particular attention will be paid to the development of capacities of CSOs with a local or regional presence to implement i) social contracting mechanisms to boost availability and accessibility of the most in-demand social services, particularly for the most vulnerable groups; ii) social entrepreneurship programmes and projects for the economic empowerment of war affected women and men; and iii) local democracy tools and mechanisms, including, where relevant, the set-up of participatory budgeting mechanisms. The capacity development modules will be delivered through expert trainers and through peer-learning with experienced CSOs hailing from war-affected areas. As appropriate, the project will explore the possibility to create an informal organizational mentoring process that pairs more experienced organizations with newly established ones, to allow for learning-by-doing and exchanges of experiences.

Output 2.2 Solutions are developed, financed, and applied, for community-based reintegration of veterans.

Project activities under Output 2.2 will be creating the conditions for the development, financing, and practical application of community-led solutions for the reintegration of veterans and their families. The output will be achieved through the following activities:

Support the design of a community-based pathway for transition from military to civilian identity.

The Project will provide expert support to the Ministry of Veteran Affairs in designing a community-based pathway for military to civilian transition. As of today, there are about 30,000 women and men veterans in Sumy Oblast. The exact number of potential veterans (those who were mobilized starting from February 24, 2022) is unknown, but it is estimated to be around 200,000 people. All these individuals will be returning to communities that are not prepared to receive a veteran (of either sex) as a full-fledged member of the community, with specific problems, but also with specific skills and potential¹⁴. In addition, there is a multiplicity of bureaucratic processes that veterans face locally during their return to civilian life.

The Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine has approached UNDP with a request to establish a veterans mentoring initiative - an "army" of veteran mentors – who, working on the basis of "peer-to-peer" methodologies, will help new women and men veteran by guiding them through the administrative processes connected to the transition from military to civilian life, providing information on and facilitating access to services, and if necessary, even accompany veterans throughout all instances. It is expected that in Sumy region, there will be approximately 400 veteran mentors. To ensure the

¹⁴ It is worth noting, that the development of human potential is included in the Sumska oblast strategy for the post-war reconstruction of the region (<https://fex.net/uk/s/ctoxonx>).

effectiveness of the program, the Project team will provide capacity building for the first group of mentors through a five-day training session and a seven-day study visit to Lviv oblast¹⁵.

The Project will target communities where ex-combatants live, support receiving communities and civil society organizations, expand a network of veterans' peer to peer support, and develop the capacity of local, regional, and national actors. To ensure that the mentorship program is well integrated and supported by the Sumska territorial department of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Project team will collaborate closely with the representatives of the department involving them in every stage of the project implementation. Additionally, the project will provide technical assistance for the organizational development of the territorial department.

Finally, to ensure a smooth transition and effective collaboration between the veteran community and local authorities, the project team will also provide online and offline training sessions for 30 representatives of local authorities to build their capacities for effective communication and conflict-sensitive approaches to the veteran community.

Capacity development and provision of seed funding for veteran-led initiatives

To complement and multiply the effects of establishing a community-led model for veteran reintegration in their communities of origin or resettlement, the Project will provide seed funding for veteran-led initiatives, enable veterans to develop and implement community-based solutions that support their reintegration and contribute to their social and economic well-being. Initiatives to be implemented may include projects that increase physical accessibility of community structures, enable full participation of people with disabilities in community life, support veteran-led innovation and solutions, as well as reconciliation and dialogue projects.

Veteran-led initiatives will as appropriate be consulted with and channelled through the Community Security and Recovery Working Groups (CSR WGs) established by the Project in target hromadas in Sumska oblast. The Working Groups will serve as a new participatory tool to empower local communities in identifying and addressing local problems through active participation and collaboration of representatives of different vulnerable groups, including veterans. Tailored training will be provided to ensure effectiveness of this hitherto unknown tool for participatory area-based development, during which emphasis will be placed on the involvement of the veteran community, as veterans represent a unique group with specific needs and challenges. The training will provide veteran participants and veteran-led organizations with theoretical knowledge and practical skills to participate in the Working Groups effectively. Participants will also learn from the experience of other Working Groups and gain insight into best practices for community participation through peer-learning and cross-fertilization of experiences.

¹⁵ To be confirmed at the time of activity implementation. Lviv oblast preliminary identified due to the presence of extensive veteran infrastructure, - including a Lviv city veteran hub, a regional veteran hub, and the first women's veteran hub. While these organizations operate according to own charters and plans of activities, they can become excellent examples and tools in the capable hands of a mentor.

Output 2.3 Enabling conditions for strengthened community-veteran coordination mechanisms and more effective advocacy efforts and protection of the rights of veterans are created.

According to the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine¹⁶ as of today, there are 851,068 registered Anti-Terrorist Operation/Joint Forces Operation (ATO/JFO) veterans in Ukraine, of which 68,290 have recognized disabilities of the first and second groups. Official statistics do not unfortunately record data regarding the third group of disabilities, which is the most common group: it can only be assumed that the figure may increase significantly if these were taken into considerations, even as much as triple.

Among the basic rights that women and men demobilizing from the armed forces, regardless of their disability status, must be supported to realize is their right to work. Regrettably, if finding employment in big urban centres is a challenge for a person with disabilities, whether or not it possesses the status of veteran, in smaller and more rural communities, the challenges multiply manyfold. These difficulties have been only compounded by the effects of the war on the Ukrainian job market: as of the end of March 2022, more than half of Ukrainians who worked before February 24th had lost their jobs; the official unemployment forecast in Ukraine for 2023 is 26 per cent.

Being able to guarantee a livelihood for oneself and one's family is however one of the key enabling factors for reintegration of veterans into civilian life, and to a broader extent for a successful return process. To address this issue, and to support upholding of key human rights, the Project will seek to create a conducive environment for the employment of veterans with disabilities, and people with disabilities in general within law enforcement and civil protection agencies.

The targeting of law enforcement and civil protection agencies for the activities described below is guided by the understanding that the work of these security service providers is associated with a higher-than-average risk of injuries, stress, and emotional burnout. Personnel of the State Emergency Service and of the National Police are often first to arrive at the scene of an incident and are exposed to substantial danger while performing their duties, especially after the beginning of the war. It follows that the human resources practices and procedures within these institutions must place strong emphasis on and be especially sensitive to the issue of disability and adopt modern and inclusive approaches to retraining and retaining/employing individuals, women and men, living with disabilities.

Further, the veterans of both sexes are likely to possess skillsets and experience that can be of use, with the appropriate safeguards, within the security and civil protection sector.

Thus, to support the creation of linkages between the community of individuals with disabilities and potential employers within the security sector; and to support the establishment of "disability friendly" human resources practices with the view to uphold the right to work for veterans with disabilities and people with disabilities at large, the Project will engage in the activities specified below.

Conduct a desk study of existing models of employment of veterans in law enforcement agencies drawing from international experiences.

A desk study will be commissioned to explore existing models and international best practices in the employment of veterans, including those with disabilities, in law enforcement agencies drawing from the

¹⁶ <https://data.mva.gov.ua/>

experience of other countries. The study will include a review of the current policies, programs, and initiatives that support the employment of veterans in law enforcement agencies in countries with comparable conditions and experiences to Ukraine¹⁷. The study will analyse and compare the different models, identify key success factors, and provide case studies and recommendations of successful programs and initiatives that can be adapted and implemented in Ukraine.

Build capacities to enable the inclusion of veterans with disabilities in law enforcement and civil protection agencies.

Taking into consideration the results of the desk study, comprehensive capacity building activities will be offered to staff of the National Police of Ukraine and the State Emergency Services of Ukraine to facilitate the inclusion of veterans with disabilities in their forces. The activity will specifically address the hiring processes of security service providers to ensure they have tools and understanding to work with veterans, particularly those with disabilities. The training will cover topics such as disability awareness, reasonable accommodation, effective communication, and workplace culture. The training will provide participants with the knowledge and skills they need to create an inclusive workplace for veterans with disabilities and people with disabilities in general, so that the spill over from the activity will contribute to the overall effectiveness of the security sector.

The training will also include a practical component where participants can apply what they have learned through case studies and role-plays. The training will be facilitated by subject matter experts, such as disability advocates, HR professionals, or veterans themselves. The training will be complemented and reinforced by creating success stories, printed materials, and other related outreach activities that will facilitate building a culture of inclusion and diversity within the security sector and promote the employment of people with disabilities and veterans.

Based on feedback, suggestions, and recommendations received after the implementation of the training module, the Project will explore the possibility to integrate the training into the HR practices of law enforcement and emergency agencies across Ukraine.

Further, to support raising awareness and promote a culture of inclusion within the security sector of the rights of veterans with disabilities and people with disabilities in general, on or more dedicated event(s) will be organized on the protection of the rights of people with disabilities within the departments of the local police units and as part of the work of security service providers in general. The event(s) will focus on the ethics of dealing with people with disabilities, both as security service recipients and colleagues.

Finally, the Project will provide, on a competitive basis, financing for pilot initiatives of security service providers aimed at equipping the workspace for people with disabilities, to create the necessary working conditions and a comfortable and accessible environment for personnel with disabilities.

Output 3.1: Youth has enough capacities to be engaged in local recovery and national policymaking to become a part of the dialogue and experience sharing among civil society organizations (incl. EU-based)

¹⁷ The selection of international comparisons will be taking into account the report “Review of international practice in the reintegration of veterans - Considerations for Ukraine in the war and post-war context” commissioned by UNDP in 2022.

Youth engagement in conflict and post-conflict settings is an essential step towards inclusive recovery and towards the return to development pathways. Empowering young people to become agents of change and create opportunities for them to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, and their communities is thus one of the strategic directions that will be pursued by the Project to ensure that the enormous potential of youth is harnessed for the benefit of their communities.

In addition to the data presented in the contextual analysis on the importance of young people in the recovery process, it is worth noting that according to a [survey](#) of more than 300 youth representatives in Sumy conducted by the Sumy City Youth Council, in the context of post-conflict recovery, there is a strong desire among young people to be involved in the recovery processes. For instance, approximately two-thirds of respondents expressed their interest in joining youth initiatives. However, this natural inclination of young people towards post-war challenges is impeded by their lack of volunteering experience and the absence of a participatory culture. The same study revealed that only around 30 percent of young people had previously engaged in such activities. Young people may face numerous barriers to participation in community life, including lack of resources, limited access to information, and lack of representation in decision-making processes.

For this reason, the Project will take a multi-layer approach that will on the one hand build capacities and interest of young women and men to take an active role in charting and contributing to the recovery of their communities, while on the other sensitize local authorities and raise their awareness on the importance of youth engagement for an inclusive and sustainable future.

Capacity building for youth leaders and members of youth development infrastructure to enhance their effectiveness in collaborating with local actors with focus on the development of mechanisms and elements that promote a culture of participation.

Despite the ongoing war and the multiple challenges faced by youth as a result of displacement, lack of security, difficult access to education etc., young Ukrainians of both sexes remain motivated to drive positive change in their communities and the Project has an important role to play in promoting and supporting youth participation and civic engagement in this volatile environment. By providing resources, training, and advocacy, the Project will seek to empower them to take an active role in their communities and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

Under this activity, the Project will encourage and support the participation of young women and men to decision-making bodies at the local level, such as local councils or youth councils/committees. This will enable young people's voices to be heard and increased their capacity to influence the decisions that affect their lives. To achieve this objective, the Project will provide training and capacity building programs for young people to help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to effectively use the participatory platforms and tools of democracy for decision-making processes at the local level. A non-exhaustive list of skills includes leadership, public speaking, advocacy, and community organizing, project management, partnership building, etc.

The capacity building activities will involve the representatives of local authorities and, therefore, advocate for and facilitate the creation of pathways, policies and practices that promote youth participation at the local level, such as inclusive decision-making processes and the establishment of youth-friendly spaces and services.

Promotion of active citizenship through in-country youth study visits/exchanges for sharing the best youth engagement, empowerment, and participation practices.

As highlighted in the youth dialogue conducted by UNDP and UNFPA over the course of the second half of 2022, young people are often disproportionately affected by violence and displacement, and depending on their area of residence they may face challenges in accessing education, healthcare, and other basic services. Once again, despite these challenges, young people have also shown resilience and a strong desire to participate in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts.

According to SHARP data (unpublished) young people are more likely to have engaged in volunteering and civic initiatives (including donations) since the beginning of the war, they show the highest sense of civic duty, and are more likely to show an open and pluralistic attitude to the Ukrainian identity. Further, there are strong indications that displacement in itself has had a positive impact on bringing in contact individuals of different ages and cultural backgrounds and fostered a better understanding and welcoming attitude towards others. Displaced populations are more trustful in local authorities and showcase a higher-than-average sense of civic duty. Bringing these elements together and building on past (pre- and post-war) successful initiatives of exchanges between youth in conflict affected areas and youth in other areas of Ukraine, the Project will facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange events (visits, roundtables, camps) between local youth organizations, as well as between youth and local decision-makers. In so doing, the Project will make sure that the best examples and practices of youth engagement and participation in civic life are widely known and serve as models for other less-experienced young people; and will help young people learning from each other's experiences and build collaborative networks and partnerships.

Support to youth-led local development initiatives.

In the words of the Ukrainian youth-led NGO leader, [Yaroslav Minkin](#), “the best method to empower youth leaders is by supporting local initiatives and giving out seed funding for small projects that young people will implement themselves. All they need is a basic framework that gives them some knowledge and skills, not through lectures but through hands-on training”.

Through financial support to local youth-led organizations and initiatives, such as youth-led community projects, advocacy campaigns, and training programs the Project will support the creation of a culture of youth participation in decision-making and contribute to changing the perception of young women and men from being recipient to being active players in the decisions and processes that affect them. Based on previous experience of youth fundraising challenges and events such as *ideathons*, young people tend to be less anchored to traditional schemes and principles of community development and are more likely to provide fresh insights and provide innovative solutions, to recovery/development challenges. For this reason, beyond the positive impact that the Project is going to make on this special target group, it is expected that giving visibility and relevance to youth initiatives will strongly contribute to local development and unlock the potential for innovation already available in the community.

Output 3.2: Whole-of-community initiatives are identified and financed to empower citizens, people with disabilities as a result of the ongoing war, and other vulnerable groups to participate in and benefit from community recovery and service provision.

Under this Output the project aims to support community recovery and service provision in war-affected areas through the joint identification and financing of whole-of-community initiatives that empower

citizens, and especially vulnerable groups, to participate in and benefit from community recovery and service provision.

This objective will be achieved through the following activities:

Building local capacities for design and implementation of community-led initiatives.

This activity will build the capacity of local actors to design and implement whole-of-community initiatives along the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus as to ensure that durable solutions for internal displacement, integration and reintegration projects and programmes are in place, and are led and owned by communities and implemented on a participatory basis and in inclusive manner. The Project will offer training and mentorship opportunities to local actors, including civil society organizations and initiative groups, to develop skills in project management, community engagement, social contracting, and conflict-sensitive programming. Whenever feasible and appropriate, inter-oblast exchanges and lessons learning will be supported by linking up local residents and CSOs to peers in other areas where UNDP is implementing community-led recovery processes. In doing so, the capacity strengthening activity will be enriched by opportunities for dialogue and have positive indirect effects on bolstering social cohesion and mutual understanding between Ukrainian of different geographical and cultural backgrounds.

Provision of seed funding for locally led community security and recovery initiatives, including light repairs of key community infrastructure.

This activity will provide seed funding for locally developed, led, and owned community security and recovery initiatives, which might include, but are not limited to, i) projects on community policing and gender-based violence prevention, ii) access to justice, iii) mediation and conflict resolution, iv) improving accessibility to the most in-demand social, psychosocial and rehabilitation services, including through a social contracting mechanism, v) advocacy on behalf of the most vulnerable community groups, vi) initiatives in support to gender equality initiatives, vii) durable solutions for internal displacement and viii) community based reintegration and integration of ex-combatants, IDPs, returnees, people with disabilities, elderly people and other marginalized and war-affected groups.

Seed funding will be also provided for light repairs of key community infrastructure, such as shelters/day centres, schools, health facilities, employment centres, and collective housing, to support community service provision. The seed funding will enable communities to quickly repair essential infrastructure and restore vital services that were disrupted by the conflict. Whenever feasible, the Project will also consider financing of community infrastructure for security, such as bomb shelters or reinforced bus stops, and the establishment of physical (and online) spaces appropriate to serve as resource hubs for social integration, dialogue, and cultural, social and recovery initiatives that engage local residents, displaced populations, and returnees in target hromadas.

Facilitating the development of social entrepreneurship models.

As already noted, economic empowerment and creation of job opportunities plays a significant role in the movements of populations within Ukraine, and especially in the decision of displaced populations to return to their areas of origin. Service provision is another key trigger identified in “intention to return” surveys. However, at a time where local budgets are overburdened by the need to provide emergency assistance, supplementing/strengthening local service provision through the introduction of alternative models and approaches is of paramount importance. Through this activity the Project will facilitate the development and piloting of social entrepreneurship models for civil society organizations as a tool for sustainable financing of their operations while at the same time generating a return for the community.

The two-pronged approach will encompass, on the one hand, the capacity strengthening of civil society actors and, on the other, grant financing to help them develop sustainable business models that generate revenue and contribute to their financial sustainability, while designing and implementing local solutions to social, cultural, or environmental issues. It is expected that the introduction of social entrepreneurship models, and the engagement of the private sector, will significantly advance the overall goal of enabling community recovery in war-affected areas.

What are the main OUTCOMES (changes and effects for the target groups) that will be achieved through the project? Describe briefly.

Outcome 1: Local communities and local justice service providers more effectively implement response and recovery processes.

Activities to be implemented under Outcome 1 will seek to reinforce and support existing systems for crisis response at community level, with the aim to ensure fair and equitable access to time critical and early recovery assistance, that is based on objective needs, and through sustainable mechanisms that are fully community-led. Particular attention will be placed on ensuring that mental health support remains at the centre of Project action, through a) the provision of specialized support to frontline workers and activists engaged in the response, including those engaged in supporting vulnerable groups such as veterans; and b) awareness raising and advocacy towards the “normalization” of approaching mental health professional and the diffusion of self-help recovery and restoration practices. The same systems will be pivotal in ensuring and advocating fair and transparent service provision, in particular justice service provision for particularly vulnerable groups. In parallel, the increased accessibility and fairness of justice service provision at local level will generate positive spill overs that will enable a) an increased level of trust between citizens and local institutions and b) and increased willingness for displaced individuals to return to their communities of origin with the expectation to receive legal guidance on opportunities for compensation for war-related losses.

Outcome 2: Social fabric is strengthened, and social divisions are bridged through greater institutional and citizen dialogue, and through enabling reintegration of veterans in their communities.

Activities to be implemented under Outcome 2 will seek to establish and operationalize at hromada level effective and inclusive systems for the design of response and recovery initiatives to be identified in a participatory manner by all stakeholders within the Project target areas. In so doing, the Project will support increased local capacities for resilience and development, as well as localization and popularization of participatory approaches for area-based development. Special attention will be paid to creating the enabling environment and conditions for the reintegration of demobilizing women and men into their communities of origin, and their transition from a military to a civilian identity. To achieve this objective, the Project will encourage and facilitate the active participation of veterans in all dialogue and planning mechanisms established at hromada level for recovery and development, with the view to foster improved understanding between the veteran community and the community as a whole and unlock the potential and social capital of veterans for the betterment of their communities of origin.

Outcome 3: Citizens, especially young women and men, take an active role in inclusive, area-based planning and implementation of security and recovery initiatives.

Activities in support to the achievement of Outcome 3 will be focused on building capacities of young women and men, as key drivers of change and peacebuilding agents, to engage in the (early) recovery of their hromadas and help the transition towards development pathways. The war has severely affected the young people in Ukraine but, at the same time, motivated youth to engage in civic activism. According to the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine data as a result of the war, 40% of young people in Ukraine have been affected: more than two million young people have become internally displaced persons and around two million young people have been forced to flee abroad. At the same time, since the outbreak of the full-scale war, Ukrainian youth have been very active in the emergency response, engaging as volunteers in their communities, helping with distribution of humanitarian aid and to accommodate IDPs and vulnerable population. Young people's sense of civic duty and civic engagement is further highlighted in the results the SHARP survey. Youth engagement already plays and will continue having a pivotal role in the joint national government-civil society led emergency response, and for this reason the Project will take a two-pronged approach that will on the one hand build capacities and interest in young women and men to pursue active citizenship, and on the other sensitize, through targeted advocacy efforts and as necessary capacity strengthening activities, local authorities to the need to establish constructive dialogue and collaborative partnership with this constituency.

For each OUTPUT and OUTCOME mentioned above, specify how it will be measured:

Indicator	Baseline data (Sumy oblast only) as of Q4 2022	Target data	Source
OUTCOME 1			
Level of trust in local institutions (Scale 0-10)	6.1	6.7	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Trust in courts (Scale 0-10)	4.4	4.8	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Trust in Prosecutor General's Office (Scale 0-10)	5.2	5.7	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Trust in NGO (NGOs / CSOs (Scale 0-10)	7.3	8.0	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Satisfaction with provision of justice services (% of those who think justice services (e.g., courts) in their locality are provided very or somewhat efficiently)	37%	41%	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Satisfaction with provision of administrative services (% of those who think administrative services (e.g., TSNAP, residence registration, issuing passports and other documents) in their locality	69%	76%	SHARP/SCORE assessment

are provided very or somewhat efficiently)			
% of respondents who report “sufficient” availability of psychological counselling and support services in their locality (disaggregated by age and sex)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Output 1.1			
Cumulative number of mental health professionals assisted with capacity development initiatives who report and improvement in their skills (disaggregated by sex)	0	No less than 75%	Project records
Number of first responders trained on stress management and prevention of harmful coping mechanisms who report and improvement in their skills, disaggregated by sex, and age	0	No less than 75%	Project records
Output 1.2			
Needs assessment of the legal needs of the veterans and their family members completed and results shared with project stakeholders	NO	YES	Project records
Number of war-affected individuals benefiting from legal aid services and advice, disaggregated by sex.	0	30,000 of beneficiaries (at least 40% of women)	Free Legal Aid System stats (https://legalaid.gov.ua/statystychna-informacziya-roboty-systemy-bezoplatnoyi-pravovoyi-dopomogy/)
“eZbytky” platform is launched and operational	NO	YES	Project records
OUTCOME 2			
Community cooperation (Scale 0-10)	5.7	10% increase over baseline	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Mobility intentions (% of those who plan to move to another oblast or to move abroad in next month)	5%	10% increase over baseline	SHARP/SCORE assessment

Sense of belonging to the settlement (Scale 0-10)	8.5	10% increase over baseline	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Community cohesion (Scale 0-10)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Openness to dialogue (Scale 0-10)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Intergroup Social Proximity (Scale 0-10)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Output 2.1			
Number of community level working groups established and effectively functioning in Project's target communities	0	6	Project records
Number of individuals who are actively participating in the work of community level working groups (disaggregated by sex, age, and disability status)	0	240	Project records
Percentage of members of community level working groups who feel their voices are taken into account in improving community security and recovery	0	No less than 75%	Project records
Output 2.2			
Number of veteran-mentors with improved capacity to support newly demobilizing individual to transition from military to civilian life (disaggregated by sex)	0	60 (50% women)	Project records, pre-/post training survey
Number of veteran organizations trained to engage with community platforms to design and implement project in support to community recovery	0	30	Project records

Number of veterans benefiting from community-based initiatives addressing their specific needs (disaggregated by sex, age, disability status)	0	150 (40% women)	Project records
Output 2.3			
Desk study of existing models of employment of veterans in law enforcement agencies completed and results shared with project stakeholders	NO	YES	Project records Evidence of launch event
Number of staff in human resources departments of law enforcement and civil protection agencies benefiting from improved knowledge on inclusion within their personnel of veteran with disabilities and people with disabilities in general (disaggregated by sex)	0	30 (70% women)	Project records
OUTCOME 3			
Sense of civic duty ¹⁸ (Scale 0-10; only for 18-35 age group)	7.8	15% increase over baseline	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Civic engagement (Scale 0-10; only for 18-35 age group)	3.2	15% increase over baseline	SHARP/SCORE assessment
Active citizenship (Scale 0-10; only for 18-35 age group)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Locality satisfaction (Scale 0-10; only for 18-35 age group)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment
Migration tendency (Scale 0-10; only for 18-35 age group)	n/a	10% increase over baseline	SCORE assessment

¹⁸ Due to the small number of respondents (34) the findings are not considered to be generalizable to the wider youth population in Sumska oblast.

Output 3.1			
Number of youth organizations trained to engage with community platforms to design and implement project in support to community recovery	0	5	Project records
Number of youths participating in exchange activities (disaggregated by sex)	0	20 (11 young women)	Project records
Number of youth-led initiatives implemented in target hromadas	0	5	Project records
Output 3.2			
Number of community infrastructure objects being identified and rehabilitated through participatory and community-led consultation processes.	0	2	Project records
Number of local recovery projects planned in a conflict and gender sensitive manner and implemented by CSOs and citizens groups (including those led by women, youth, and ex-combatants)	0	20	Project records
Number of communities where social entrepreneurship models are successfully being piloted (disaggregated by women- and youth- led social enterprises)	0	2 communities 50% youth-led social enterprises 50% female-led social enterprises	Project records

IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATION(S)**General**

Why is your organisation relevant for implementing the proposed activity?

UNDP Ukraine has a long experience of working with operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus within the work of the United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP), which has been implemented by four United Nations agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) since 2015. The UN RPP has addressed priority needs in eastern Ukraine arising since the outbreak of the armed conflict in the spring of 2014. The programme was designed to strengthen community security and social cohesion, support the economic recovery of conflict-affected communities, and further the implementation of decentralization and healthcare reforms in government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The UN RPP target areas, spread along the 2014 line of contact, were an ideal laboratory for the implementation of activities that bridged the gap between the humanitarian response and development programming, adopting area-based and people-centred approaches.

Joint efforts with humanitarian actors such as UNHCR during 2022 have resulted in community-led identification of local needs and priorities, and in the design of locally owned solutions that reduced the community's dependence on humanitarian support. These efforts were also effective in increasing social cohesion in target communities in eastern Ukraine as testified by improving recordings of the SCORE index over time: the experience accumulated in conflict affected contexts can be now adapted to bolster social cohesion and collective resilience of the war-affected communities, transit hubs, and hosting areas by addressing tensions through a variety of activities.

Building on above, UNDP is well placed to deliver on a nexus approach for Ukraine ahead, on the basis of long-established partnerships with the key national actors – Government, private sector and civil society – whose resilience must be bolstered to lead the country from crisis response to recovery.

UNDP has a well-established and trusted relationship with the Government of Ukraine at all levels, with existing programmes and projects to support the President's Office and Cabinet of Ministers, key line ministries, and 34 local government units encompassing over 330 municipalities. Likewise, 15 different hubs of civil society organizations have been supported by UNDP, helping to ensure that the views of a vibrant third sector are more clearly reflected in development processes and national democratic governance agenda. Civil society partnerships were essential to enable UNDP's quick reaction to the February 2022 events, and its quick pivoting from the standard development programming, to sustain Government and communities' capacity to coordinate and respond to the crisis. Civic initiative groups and dialogue platforms that were created and capacitated in eastern Ukraine since 2015 were the channel that ensured immediate assessment of needs and response in war-affected communities in the aftermath of the escalation of the conflict into the full-scale war.

At the request of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, UNDP is currently providing technical assistance to the development of the National Recovery and Modernization Strategy, with work ongoing to agree on scope, methodology and partners.

Describe your organisation(s).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) works in about 170 countries and territories, helping to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and exclusion, and build resilience so countries can sustain progress. As the UN's development agency, UNDP plays a critical role in helping countries achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

In Ukraine, UNDP operates along five programmatic areas of support: government capacities for crisis response and management; sustaining the provision of public services; emergency works facilitating return and reconstruction; incomes, livelihoods, and private sector response; and civil society and maintenance of the social fabric.

UNDP launched its Resilience Building and Recovery (RBR) Programme for Ukraine on April 11th, 2022, to immediately respond to the development and humanitarian challenges. The overall objective of the Programme is to preserve development gains in Ukraine as fully as possible, mitigating risks of descent into a governance and service delivery crisis, embedding activities for recovery from the onset of the humanitarian effort, and facilitating a swift return to development pathways and processes for national attainment of the SDGs.

The UNDP RBR Programme is a multi-sectoral programme comprised of three outcomes to achieve its intended results. The strategy of the Programme is to maintain and bolster the resilience of UNDP's long-standing national and local partners in Ukraine – the Government, the private sector and civil society – ensuring that they have the capacities and resources to lead crisis response and recovery efforts in line with principles of national ownership and aspiration toward sustainable and inclusive development pathways in view of Ukraine's commitment to the EU Green Deal, the larger EU-Ukraine association agreement and the recent EU candidate status:

Outcome 1: Government at all levels continues to function effectively, with reinforced capacities to lead crisis response, sustain public service provision, and coordinate the delivery of assistance and recovery efforts that leave no-one behind.

Outcome 2: Ukraine's high human capital, productive capacities, and natural resources are leveraged to meet immediate humanitarian needs of diverse groups and strengthen social and economic recovery.

Outcome 3: Ukrainian institutions and civil society have the capacity and resources to maintain and strengthen the social fabric, uphold human rights for all people, and ensure the inclusion, protection, and empowerment of all, including population groups with intersecting and multiple vulnerabilities.

Capacity

Has an up-to-date capacity assessment (e.g., ISO-9000) of the implementing organisation been carried out (include the date)?

UNDP operates in Ukraine on the basis of a Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA), that embodies the basic conditions under which the UNDP shall assist the Government in carrying out its development projects, and under which such UNDP-assisted projects shall be executed. UNDP also produces a Country Programme Document (CPD) that outlines the key strategic priorities for action in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals over a 4-year period in consultation and alignment with Government-identified national priorities. UNDP does not undergo external capacity assessments.

Your organisation's experience and successes in terms of expertise and effectiveness, evaluation and learning capacity, transparency, accountability and public support, knowledge of the country context, inclusive approach and sustainability?

Since 1993 UNDP has assisted the government of Ukraine in developing solutions for the transition from a planned to a market economy and for establishing democratic systems. UNDP's engagement and partnership with national and sub-national institutions has been a catalyst for laws and policies as well as strengthening institutions in preparing the country for deeper global integration.

The findings of Independent Country Programme Evaluation (ICPE), conducted in 2021 found that UNDP's positioning in the country is very strong and is based on several institutional advantages including:

(a) *a long history of relationships of trust and excellent collaboration* with government at all levels, civil society and private sector entities;

(b) *strong technical and financial expertise*, which national stakeholders recognize and appreciate by entrusting UNDP with (i) the country's health procurement when the COVID-19 pandemic started, (ii) the advancement of its digital transformation, especially as to its e-government agenda and e-service provision and (iii) supporting its transition towards a green economy;

(c) *capacity to rapidly respond to changing circumstances and evolving needs in highly volatile operational contexts*, a model case of collaboration at a time of crisis according to national stakeholders.

(d) *capacity to offer a mix of integrated, homegrown and co-created innovative solutions* that combine policy and regulatory advice with capacity development and implementation support;

(e) *strong and capillary field presence*, especially in eastern Ukraine, but also throughout the country through its partnerships with 34 local governments, 15 networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and 332 municipalities;

(f) *well established multi-stakeholder platforms* for action on priorities around Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local and national level.

Is there an annual report audited by an external and independent auditor?

UNDP is audited by the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), these audits are internal. The OAI monitors the progress made in addressing the issues raised by the audit. The implementation rate per audit report is first displayed three months after the report's public disclosure and is then periodically updated. Audit recommendations are normally expected to be implemented within 18 months. A list of audit recommendations that are outstanding for 18 months or more is included in OAI annual report to the Executive Board on audit and investigations. Please refer to the website <https://audit-public-disclosure.undp.org>

If the organisation is acting as an intermediary (i.e., channelling the funds to other implementing partners), how has supervision been arranged and what are the individual roles of the parties concerned? Also describe how your organisation selects the implementing partners.

According to Article 17 of UNDP's financial regulations, an implementing partner is "the entity to which the Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in a signed document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in such document."

There five possible categories of implementing partners include:

- **Government entities (only for national implementation/NIM projects)**

- **UNDP** (direct implementation/DIM¹⁹)
- **United Nations agencies**
- **Civil society, including non-governmental organizations**
- **Non-UN intergovernmental organizations**

The implementing partner for a project is selected based on careful consideration of a set of programmatic criteria. The partner must:

- a. Be accountable for delivering on the expected outputs in the time required, manage risks, and sustain results after the project ends;
- b. Ensure national ownership and broad stakeholder engagement;
- c. Ensure sustainability of project results;
- d. Provide sensitivity and neutrality in project implementation as required;
- e. Carry out the key technical, financial, and administrative capacities required for the project; and
- f. Deliver good value for money and accountability for resources.

UNDP as the implementing partner may enter into a written agreement with other organizations, known as **responsible parties**, to provide goods and/or services to the project, carry out project activities and/or produce outputs using the project budget. Any organization that is legally constituted and duly registered may become a responsible party for a UNDP project where UNDP is the implementing partner or providing country office support to the implementing partner (and that support involves contracting a responsible party for certain activities). The process of contracting of Responsible Parties and grantees is regulated by the UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP).

UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations and government agencies selected to serve as responsible parties are exempted from competitive procurement processes. They can be selected under programming modalities described in this policy and identified in a signed project document or project board decision.

Civil society organizations, including NGOs and foundations, as well as duly accredited academia and state-owned enterprises as responsible parties can be engaged on the basis of two approaches:

- **Collaborative advantage:** engaging organizations in programmatic activities that are uniquely positioned in terms of their value, legitimacy and/or access to particular groups of beneficiaries or geographic areas.
- **Competitive selection:** involving organizations to provide specific project inputs and/or undertake well-defined project activities in situations where competition is expected to optimize results.

A Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) micro-assessment is mandatory for responsible parties if the amount expected to be transferred exceeds \$150,000 per year at the UNDP Country Office level (not per individual project) within a determined programme cycle.

In addition to contracting one or more responsible parties, UNDP may award **low-value grants** as cash awards - selected via programmatic decisions - to civil society and non-governmental partners intended to generate and solicit development solutions for which no repayment is typically required.

UNDP makes low-value grants for non-credit purposes to support the following types of activities:

- a. Strengthening the institutional capacity of entities critical for achieving development objectives.

¹⁹ This project is to be implemented by UNDP in Direct Implementation Modality.

- b. Supporting community-based self-help initiatives, which may include income-generating activities designed to alleviate poverty;
- c. Promoting advocacy activities and networking between civil society organizations, a government, and donors;
- d. Supporting NGOs and community-based organizations involved with local environmental protection and poverty eradication activities; and/or
- e. Development challenges that still require some level of experimentation to identify possible solutions.

Low-value grants are typically used to engage with stakeholders who have a unique or distinct perspective on a development challenge, either because they represent populations excluded from the development process, or because they have particular legitimacy or exposure to a development challenge. Low-value grants can be awarded to civil society and non-governmental organizations, including academic or educational institutions that are not state-owned or for-profit. Grant recipients either represent beneficiaries of the project or can be beneficiaries themselves. Low-value grant recipients are not considered responsible parties.

UNDP is responsible for assessing the grant-making institution to ensure it has the programmatic, financial and management capacities and systems to effectively undertake its roles.

Selection of a grant recipient is based on a solicitation process with the selection criteria defined in the project document, and the review of grant proposals by a selection committee as is part of any development project. If the project document makes no other provisions, a grant is awarded based on a review by the project board. Grants are disbursed in one or more tranches, either before the expected result is achieved or based on performance. The same grantee can receive multiple grants up to a maximum of \$300,000 in a programme period. To receive multiple grants, the grant recipient organization must have produced the results agreed to in the prior grant agreement, and a new low-value grant agreement must be approved by the project board.

For the implementation of this Project, UNDP intends to award several low-value grants to eligible parties for the achievement of the objectives of the Project itself.

Integrity

Have the organisation's integrity policy and associated procedures and accountability regarding inappropriate behaviour been assessed? Please describe whether:

- the organisation has a policy in place (code of conduct) whereby staff can be held to account regarding certain behaviours;
- the organisation has a channel for reporting incidents, such as an integrity adviser;
- the organisation has whistle-blower regulations in place;
- the organisation reports on incidents in its social annual report, for example.

All UNDP staff worldwide are required to abide by UN staff regulations and rules and UNDP Code of Ethics. Every UNDP staff member, regardless of level and rank, including consultants, service contractors, volunteers and interns is expected to comply with the Code of Ethics while working for UNDP. All staff upon appointment sign declaration stating that they will act with independence and impartiality and regulate their conduct with the interests of UN only in view, and not seek or accept instructions in regard to performance of their duties from any Government or other external body. All staff of UN system organizations are also expected to abide by the Standards of Conduct for International Civil Service.

UNDP has an established mechanism of organisation-wide accountability to programme countries, including project beneficiaries, and donors to support increased transparency, clarity, and alignment — the Corporate Accountability Framework.

UNDP also has a Legal Framework for addressing non-compliance with the UN Standards of Conduct, which defines the mechanisms currently existing within UNDP for reporting allegations of wrongdoing, as well as what constitutes misconduct.

Anyone who cooperates in good faith with an investigation of allegations of misconduct of UNDP staff is entitled to protection from retaliation in accordance with the UNDP Policy for Protection against Retaliation.

In the interests of transparency, the UNDP Administrator informs the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board of disciplinary decisions taken in the course of the preceding year and publishes an annual report of cases of misconduct that have resulted in the imposition of disciplinary measures.

RISKS

Contextual risks

Risk (description)	Potential impact on outputs of activity (Low/Medium/High + explanation)	Risk assessment (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigating measures and residual risk (incl. appreciation)
Significant escalation of the active fighting beyond the current axes of hostilities with major advances of the Russian army in other regions of the country.	High Deterioration of the security situation in the Project's target areas may preclude minimal security conditions necessary for programming. Many of these areas remain in close proximity to the border with the Russian Federation and could face renewed fighting and become inaccessible.	High	To mitigate this risk, UNDP will implement the Project under the guidance of the UN Department for Safety and Security and the authority of the UN Designated Security Official. Ongoing liaison with formal authorities and community leaders will also be held to secure a safe environment for Project staff and implementing partners. Building capacities of community security providers and supporting the establishment of community-based security systems for each target area is essential for limiting security risks. Risk assessment and mitigation will be addressed through the regular political economy and security analysis and consultations with key partners and security service providers. Tested business continuity and security plans and

			standard operating procedures will be in place and updated regularly to mitigate the impact of existing and potential threats to the Project staff.
Replacement of local or regional government leaders, or the inability of local governments to function due to the war.	Change of partner's priorities and repurposing of Project's activities due to the war. Partners will not be able to engage in Project's implementation.	Medium	The mitigation strategy will include identifying and aligning with key community members who can support and promote ongoing community participation in the implementation of Project activities.

Programme risks

Risk (description)	Potential impact on outputs of activity (Low/Medium/High explanation)	Risk assessment (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigating measures and residual risk (incl. appreciation)
Inefficient coordination with humanitarian actors, new donors, and other UN agencies	Inefficient coordination can lead to duplication of activities and a lack of synergy between the UN partners and other humanitarian actors in the Programme's target areas.	Low	The mitigation strategy will include continuing regular donor coordination meetings at the oblast level, ensuring productive cooperation with other UN agencies through established mechanisms and tools (Clusters, UNET, joint programming, etc.).
Implementation challenges due to the increased presence of other development organizations in the region	Increased presence of other development and aid organizations in the region might negatively affect Project's implementation through intensified competition for qualified local staff and overlapping interventions	Low	The Project will ensure effective coordination with other development actors through active involvement of local and regional authorities into discussions; explore the activities of other development organizations in the region.

Organisational risks

	Risk (description)	Potential impact on outputs of activity (Low/Medium/High + explanation)	Risk assessment (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigating measures and residual risk (incl. appreciation)

Monitoring and evaluation	Deterioration of security situation in geographical locations targeted by the project may impede project implementation and impact the ability to monitor activities through field visits and other means. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation activities or the failure to recruit qualified M&E staff due to a lack of national capacities may result in a risk of weak M&E systems and poor data quality for the project.	Medium Failing to meet the donor's documentation requirements and reporting deadlines may lead to reputation damage and non-adherence to the principles of results-based management, resulting in reduced effectiveness and efficiency.	Medium	In order to address the project's monitoring and supervision needs, the project will allocate sufficient budget and plan accordingly. Additionally, ensuring adequate M&E staffing will be important.
Financial and administrative management	There is a risk that there won't be enough contractors and NGOs available with sufficient qualifications.	Insufficient availability of well-qualified contractors and NGOs, as well as suppliers willing to deliver equipment to the war-affected areas, may delay some of the Project's activities.	Medium	The speed of required procurement and payment mechanisms will be mitigated through enhanced UNDP operational capacity supported by the Project resources. The appropriateness of community engagement modalities will be assured through rapid conflict analysis of the target areas and participatory dialogue with local authorities and community leaders.
Quantity and quality of capacity	Staff turnover or potential difficulties in identifying and	Slowdown or delay in project		The project will identify the known networks of experts

available for the activity	hiring highly qualified and experienced experts in the project-related areas, as due to the short-term nature of some of the contracts and limited budgets, job postings may not seem competitive to the most qualified candidates	implementation for 6 month or more		in the respective clusters, effectively disseminate the job advertisement and advertise broadly. Additionally, the project will make use of flexible human resources arrangements (i.e., the engagement of expert consultants and/or consultancy companies) to minimise this risk, while ensuring that recruitment procedures adhere to UNDP norms and standards. -
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Risk of fraud and corruption

	Risk (description)	Potential impact on outputs of activity (Low/Medium/High + explanation)	Risk assessment (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigating measures and residual risk (incl. appreciation)
In country of implementation	There is a risk of corruption practices being prevalent in the public sector and not addressed adequately	Medium Project activities undermined as a result of corruption	Low	The project will invest in rigorous vetting and monitoring activities
In programme	Risk of corruption and lack of transparency in the procurement of equipment and issuance of contracts	High The risk has the potential to reduce the value for money provided by the project, which could have a negative impact on project efficiency and intended impact	Low	To ensure efficient procurement processes, the project should ensure widespread and effective use of UNDP's procurement and open/competitive contracting procedures. Monitoring irregularities and the risk of fraud following

				UNDP's policy on fraud prevention and risk mitigation.
Within implementing organisation(s)	The partners' financial mismanagement and the UNDP's insufficient financial monitoring may lead to a risk of funds being misused.	Medium The potential negative impact on the UNDP's reputation and the possibility of impeding the achievement of project goals are consequences that may result from this risk.	Low	The project intends to transfer the funds to reputable partners via dedicated accounts and auditable procedures. The project will implement robust financial systems and conduct regular internal audits, with reinforcement through regular financial reporting. All relevant staff will receive suitable financial training. Quality assurance will be rigorously applied to ensure that funding is directed towards relevant causes, thereby contributing to the project's goal. Additionally, providing capacity development for the Implementing Partner in UNDP Policies and Procedures is important

FINANCE

Budget breakdown

Multi-year budget for the project is included as Annex I to this project proposal.