



Minutes of the

Local Project Appraisal Committee Meeting (LPAC)

23 February 2024, 14:00-15:00

On-line via Zoom Platform

"Harnessing the potential of vulnerable groups for stabilization and recovery of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine" Project

Agenda

1. **Welcoming Remarks and Introduction**

Mr. Christophoros Politis, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP in Ukraine
Mr. Florian Held, German Federal Foreign Office, Stabilization Unit
Ms. Uliana Tokarieva, Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine

2. **Project Overview**

Ms. Federica Dispenza, Community Security and Social Cohesion Specialist, IDRPB **portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine**

3. **Project Quality Assurance**

Ms. Maria Gutsman, Team Leader, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding (IDRPB) portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine

4. **Discussion. Comments and Recommendations**

5. **Any Other Business**

6. **Closing Remarks**

List of Participants

- Mr. Christophoros Politis, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP in Ukraine
- Mr. Florian Held, Stabilization Unit, German Federal Foreign Office,
- Ms. Uliana Tokarieva, Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine
- Ms. Iryna Postolovska, Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine for European Integration
- Mr. Volodymyr Khadzhyrov, State Expert, Expert Group on Support of Vulnerable Populations of Directorate for Development of Social Services, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine
- Ms. Maria Gutsman, Team Leader, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding Portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine
- Mr. Raj Kamal, Operations Manager, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Kim Mattis, Youth Engagement and Social Cohesion Specialist, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Federica Dispenza, Community Security and Social Cohesion Specialist, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine
- Mr. Roman Khashchenkov, Projects Coordinator – Community Security and Social Cohesion, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Tetiana Sylva, Community Mobilization Officer, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Zhanna Chmut, Civil Society Engagement and Capacity Development Specialist, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Olena Rudych, Programme Coordinator, Local Governance and Decentralization Reform, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Iuliia Ponomarova, Programme Analyst, Inclusive Development Recovery and Peacebuilding / Programme Associate, Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Yuliia Samus, Communications Analyst, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Lesia Shyshko, UNDP Strategic Planning, Partnerships and RBM Team Lead, UNDP in Ukraine
- Ms. Valeriia Velygorska, Programme Finance Analyst, UNDP in Ukraine

Introduction

The LPAC meeting was convened to discuss the Project document for "Harnessing the potential of vulnerable groups for stabilization and recovery of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine " Project (hereinafter referred to as "the Project") funded by the German Federal Foreign Office through the Stabilization Unit in partnership with the Government of Ukraine, which includes cooperation with authorities at national, sub-national, and local levels.

The Project is an integral part of UNDP's Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding portfolio that is supporting the economic recovery of war-torn communities and strengthening community security and social cohesion in its target communities.

Opening remarks

The LPAC meeting was chaired by **Mr. Christophoros Politis, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative**, and following a round of introduction, his opening remarks welcomed the participants at the meeting.

Mr. Politis expressed gratitude to Ms. Uliana Tokarieva, the Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine for the current partnership between UNDP and the Ministry. He underlined the importance of an approach and strategic focus on the human impact of the war, first of all, and especially on the impact of the war on specific categories and segments of partner communities that have been disproportionately impacted. This means, from the perspective of the international community, finding the right balance between investments in reconstruction/infrastructure recovery and development, and corresponding complementary investments in social policies and in strengthening/replenishing the human capital of Ukraine that we see dramatically affected as we mark the second year since the beginning of the war.

Mr. Politis also expressed appreciation towards the German Foreign Ministry, and to all partners who are continuously investing in social policies and supporting social services. He noted that the Federal Government of Germany will be hosting the Ukraine Recovery Conference in June this year.

Mr. Florian Held expressed on behalf of the Foreign Office/Stabilization Unit gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the LPAC and underline the work of the Unit to support projects which strengthen Ukrainian statehood as well as a civil society making it more resilient to withstand the continuous Russian attack, with a focus on areas adjacent to the frontline. In 2023 the Stabilization Unit, have supported projects amounting to about 65 million euros to provide rapid response to urgent demands of Ukraine, delivering much needed goods, such as personal protective equipment, energy support, or vehicles; a second area of focus is supporting accountability efforts, aiming to strengthen Ukraine's justice sector as well as its progress towards EU alignment. Mr. Held noted that the growing number of veterans in Ukraine will present a huge challenge to the fabric of Ukrainian society, and for this reason veteran support is increasingly becoming another focus of the German stabilization portfolio. Currently two projects are ongoing in partnership with IOM, a second in partnership with a German Association focusing on capacity building in the area of mental health and psychosocial support to veterans, as well as their socioeconomic reintegration. The Stabilization Unit is thus pleased that through the partnership with UNDP they will be able to further expand this focus and encouraged exchanges of information, lessons learned and insights between these different initiatives. He further noted the importance of addressing the needs of veterans, but also their participation in communal reintegration efforts; and to support the re-establishment and enhancement of gender responsive security service provision in frontline areas. These two focuses come naturally together under the project.

Mr. Held concluded expressing the hope for a continuation of the longstanding partnership with UNDP, currently focusing on the reconstruction of schools; and his sympathy to all in Ukraine as well as the unfaltering commitment of the stabilization desk and the whole Foreign Office, to continuing their support.

Ms. Uliana Tokarieva, Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine noted the role of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine in assisting many vulnerable groups, through social services and benefits, provision of assistive technologies for people with disabilities, through digital and other means to support their

rehabilitation and integration in communities. She went on to notice that in 2022 more than 7,000 families of war veterans received social services, a number that grew to more than 90,000 in 2023, in addition to allowances and benefits. Ministry needs professional capacities and support to help veterans through psychological assistance, social activities, economic reintegration etc. She expressed gratitude to UNDP and development partners and noted the already ongoing collaboration with UNDP dating back to the joint work in Donetsk region, and hope that this initiative may continue inspire hromadas to work for the most vulnerable groups.

Presentation of the project

Ms. Federica Dispenza, Community Security and Social Cohesion Specialist, IDRPB portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine made the brief presentation of the project document, its targets, covering the Project's background and implementation strategy, focus areas, coordination mechanisms, results framework, and budget.

The aim of the Local Project Appraisal Committee is to evaluate whether the design of the project that is going to be implemented by UNDP thanks to the generous funding of the Federal Government of Germany, meets key requirements in terms of quality in the design, quality assurance mechanisms for implementation, identification of risk. The presentation is added as Annex 1 to these Minutes.

Ms. Dispenza noted that project has been designed to address complex humanitarian, development and peace challenges that have affected Ukraine at large, but especially frontline areas and communities temporarily not being under the control of the government of Ukraine, where residents show a lower-than-average sense of personal security and bigger challenges in accessing social services. At the same time, the project builds on a strong commitment from partner oblasts and communities to transition from the humanitarian phase towards stabilization and recovery – constituting an ideal ground for the application of early recovery and humanitarian-development nexus approaches.

The Project's expected outcome is that communities in eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, have improved opportunities and capacities for stabilization and resilience through support to the restoration of law and order, the reintegration of veterans, and the meaningful participation of women veteran in recovery processes. This will be pursued through two distinct but complementary outputs:

- ▷ Output 1: Restoration of law and order is enabled, and civil protection capacities enhanced in frontline communities and areas that were temporarily not under the control of the Government of Ukraine.
- ▷ Output 2: Project selected communities in eastern regions of Ukraine have improved capacities to analyze, design, implement, and monitor locally led plans and initiatives in support to the reintegration of the veteran community.

Activities under Output 1 (re-establishment of security service provision) being implemented in Donetsk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia (and security allowing Luhansk) oblasts, and activities under Output 2 (reintegration of veterans) focusing on Chernihiv, Poltava, Dnipropetrovsk, and Mykolaiv oblasts. Through these two interlinked outputs the Project will seek to strengthen social cohesion in both its vertical and horizontal dimensions and pursue the progressive stabilization and enhanced resilience of communities, by unlocking the potential of all community stakeholders, regardless of their gender, age, and placement within the vulnerability spectrum, to equitably contribute to and benefit from increased political and security stability and enhanced social cohesion.

At the national level, the Project will maintain partnership with and provide information on key results and achievements to Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, and other relevant line Ministries. At the sub-national level, the Project will closely coordinate its activities with Oblast Military Administrations, local self government bodies, CSOs and initiative groups (especially veteran led) and prospective employers.

Before moving to a decision on the endorsement and approval of project initiation Ms. Dispenza opened the floor for comments from the Committee members.

Mr. Florian Held, enquired about the procurement processes for the mobile offices, on the state of advancement of specifications, as well as UNDP's past experience with similar procurements and final intended beneficiaries and delivery timelines. Ms. Dispenza noted that the specifications are already under

way and that UNDP can leverage strong experience on the procurement of mobile units that provide administrative and social services. Intended beneficiaries are both national police and the State emergency services of Ukraine in the frontline areas, who UNDP is co-designing the specifications with to ensure they correspond to the partners' needs. The Project expects that by the end of the year the mobile office units are going to be ready to be deployed and transferred to the final beneficiaries.

Ms. Maria Gutsman, Team Leader, Inclusive Development, Recovery and Peacebuilding Portfolio, UNDP in Ukraine added that:

- The project document follows the corporate policy and consider all the necessary elements for the Project's successful implementation.
- The project is in line with UNDP's strategic documents, with UNDP's Resilience Building and Recovery Framework, as well at the National Reform agenda as was reiterated and reconfirmed by the Deputy Minister of Social Policy several times during the meeting.
- The project is cost effective, and it will complement initiatives being implemented through the UNDP team in the partner oblasts through EU recovery, but also through the Mykolaiv Recovered initiative, and in addition, the project takes well into consideration gender aspects as well as the digital literacy agenda.
- Through the Project UNDP will deploy some innovative solutions like mobile offices, to make sure that the interests of the most vulnerable categories are met. Additional sustainable environmental screening might take place in the course of project implementation.

Major points discussed

Mr. Florian Held enquired about the Project's contribution and placement within the vision of the Ukrainian Government and broader framework of veteran policy in Ukraine.

Ms. Uliana Tokarieva commented that the Ministry of Social Policy is mandated to ensure the social protection of veterans, making norms on service provision to veterans and their families – including creating a model for the social adaptation of veterans and family members. This Project is a bridge between the State policy and its implementation at community level, making sure each community is able to provide social services (including social adaptation) to the veteran community. Today the majority of veteran centres are within the system of social protection, but recent data shows veteran centres were not systematically created and proper regulations for their establishment are still lacking, as well as recommendations on their improvement. The Project is thus designed fully in line with the need to providing normative underpinning for the functions that should be performed, how to integrate such centres with social service provision as a whole, and what is their role within the aim of pursuing social adaptation.

She concluded noting that dialogue platforms are also very important for the Ministry of Social Policy – as strengthening social cohesion is one of the Ministry's key objectives; by virtue of working with the most vulnerable groups the Ministry receives multiple requests for support that underline the importance to create linkages with local self-government bodies.

Ms. Federica Dispenza complemented the interventions of Ms. Tokarieva by noting that the creation of community led mechanisms for the integration of veterans is also in line with other decentralized initiatives, such as the Veterans Assistants initiative led by the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Ukraine. Further, project activities were designed in consultation with other line ministries, such as the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine from the employability perspective. The veteran hubs must be anchored within an ecosystem of support for social service provision, not just for veterans, but also bring other vulnerable groups. Veteran reintegration efforts are going to be nested within an overall community vision and community plan for the veteran community, and each centre is going to be established in response to the needs and priorities and resources that will be available at the level of the community, and responsive to the communities' specificities.

She concluded noting that veteran policy is a shared responsibility of many line Ministries, because it's a very multifaceted, complex endeavour; so the veteran centres will be the *locus* of integration of all these different guidelines resulting in a unified experience of service provision for the veterans which, however, is not meant to cordon this group off from the rest of the community: UNDP intends for these centres to be very much

open and be space for integration, space for dialogue.

Mr. Florian Held asked the Project team to elaborate on how the four oblasts selected for the veteran hubs were chosen. **Ms. Federica Dispenza** noted that partner oblast and locations were selected taking into consideration: existing presence of UNDP and activities and partnership to serve as an anchor for the project; in response to interest expressed by the partners; to the presence of a strong veteran community. She noted that if the model is successful, UNDP would be interested in looking into scaling it up in other areas; however, this would take place after thorough lessons learning.

Action points:

- The Project is fully supported by all the stakeholders and LPAC.
- The Project document is endorsed and appraised for further implementation.
- The results of design and appraisal Quality Assurance are endorsed.

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Annex 1: Presentation of the Project "*Harnessing the potential of vulnerable groups for stabilization and recovery of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine*"

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