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UKRAINE

Protection Analysis Update

The Critical Need for Protection amongst Armed Conflict and Violence

JULY 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 led to an international armed conflict, characterized by **targeted and disproportionate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, forced displacement, sexual violence and high risks of infliction of psychological distress.**

The ongoing conflict, well into its third year, has uprooted the lives of millions of Ukrainians. Over 6.5 million people have fled the country as refugeesⁱ, with a further **3.5 million internally displaced**ⁱⁱ. Within the country, over 11.5 million individuals, amongst them IDPs, returnees and non-displaced people, are in need of humanitarian protection assistance and services. Populations living in the East, South and North of the country on the frontlines, an estimated 3.3 million peopleⁱⁱⁱ, and those in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation are at particular risk.

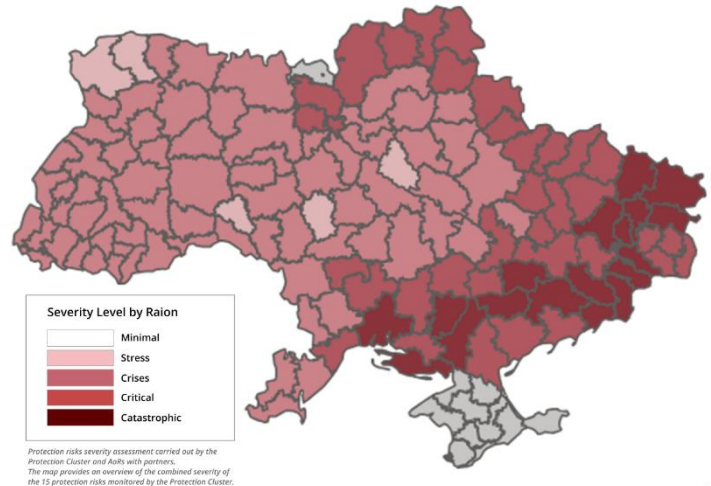


Figure 1: Protection Risk Severity Map

Since February 2022, over **33,800 civilian casualties have been recorded by the UN across Ukraine, including over 2,000 child casualties, the majority of which were a result of shelling, artillery and missile strikes**^{iv}. The impacts of the war are widespread and uneven, posing significant setbacks to the country’s development, with the greatest effects felt by the most vulnerable: IDPs, children and youth, people with disabilities, older people, LGBTQI+ persons and other groups at high risk.

TOTAL PiN (2024 HNRP)	DISPLACED	RETURNEES	NON-DISPLACED	MALES	FEMALES	CHILDREN	OLDER PEOPLE	DISABILITIES
11,531,006	29%	20%	51%	45%	55%	20%	23%	15%

In addition to protection of civilians concerns highlighted in the context, protection risks requiring immediate attention in the period covered by this analysis are:

1. **Restrictions to Freedom of Movement, Forced Displacement, and Induced Returns**
2. **Children's Physical and Psychosocial Safety and Well-Being Threatened by Compounding Risks**
3. **Gender-Based Violence, with Heightened Risks of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for Trafficking, Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of GBV**
4. **Presence of Mine and Other Explosive Ordnance**
5. **Impediments and/or Restrictions to Access to Legal Identity, Remedies and Justice**

URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED

Urgent action is needed to stop violations against civilians and mitigate the impact of the war and the consequent increase in abuse and negative coping mechanisms that have been identified. It is imperative that those responsible for violations^v of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law are held to account. With this view, it is of utmost importance to:

- Ensure the **Protection of Civilians** by all parties to the conflict. Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure must cease, and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas must be avoided at all costs.
- Ensure the most vulnerable people, including older people, people with disabilities, children, their care-givers, survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), survivors of other human rights violations and other persons at heightened risk, are provided with **principled and age-gender-disability responsive protection assistance to address risks to their physical safety and well-being**, particularly in the East, South and North, as well as in targeted pockets of humanitarian protection needs in other parts of the country.
- Enable **equitable access to basic services and rights** for internally displaced people, non-displaced and returnees through the implementation of protection interventions aimed at strengthening the national protection systems and the capacity of service providers and communities themselves, with emphasis on responsible transition in West and Center of the country and strengthened collaboration with early recovery and durable solutions actors.

CONTEXT

CIVILIAN
CASUALTIES^{vi}

33,878

CIVILIANS
INJURED

21,154

IDPs^{vii}

3,548,000

RETURNEES^{viii}

4,573,000

NON-DISPLACED^{ix}

8,912,397

Prior to February 2022, the conflict in Ukraine was centred in parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts in the East of the country, following Russia's attempted illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2014. According to Government sources, the war between 2014 and 2022 resulted in a reported 3,106 conflict-related deaths and 7,000 injuries, forcibly displacing an estimated 850,000 people^x. The invasion by the Russian Federation in February 2022 saw Russian Armed Forces deploy troops in Ukraine's South, East and North, resulting in several locations falling under Russian military control. The illegal so-called referendums held by the Russian authorities in the occupied areas of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizka in September 2022 as part of the attempted illegal annexation were declared by the United Nations General Assembly as a "violation of the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine"^{xi}, indicating that any attempt at annexation of a State's territory by another State by threat or use of force is a violation of the principles of the UN Charter and International Law.

The ongoing conflict, now in its third year, has uprooted the lives of millions of Ukrainians, driving the **mass internal displacement of over 3.5 million people**, over half of them in Dnipropetrovska, Kharkivska, Kyivska and Kyiv city, and Odeska oblasts. While Dnipropetrovska oblast remains the oblast with the highest internal displacement in the country, Donetsk oblast is the main oblast of origin for displaced people. Over **6.5 million refugees** have been recorded, with 91% seeking refuge in Europe. Nearly **4.6 million people in Ukraine have returned to their homes**, of which 57% were displaced for three months or longer. As of April 2024, there are 3,548,000 registered IDPs in Ukraine, with the highest number hosted in Dnipropetrovska (14%) and Kharkivska (12%) oblasts. For those who have been internally displaced, displacement within the same oblast or macro-region is most frequently reported, and approximately 60% report having been displaced for a period of one year or longer. A decrease in the number of IDPs in 2023 can be attributed to an increase in the number of returnees, with almost half of returnees residing in Kyiv city or Kyivska oblast.

The impacts of war are widespread and uneven, and the greatest effects felt by the most vulnerable, including women and men at heightened risk, children and youth, people with disabilities and older people, IDPs, the Roma population and LGBTQI+ people. **The human impact has been substantial**, with a combination of loss of private sector jobs and income, high inflation, and asset loss reversing 15 years of poverty reduction. Total losses in the livelihoods and social protection sector are estimated at US\$60.8 billion, with the largest share of losses stemming from the permanent loss of jobs and workers and only 44% of individuals who were employed before the invasion working at their regular workplaces^{xii}. Almost 20% of Protection Monitoring Tool (PMT) key informants across the country assess the situation as sufficiently safe, however the fact that this assessment is made by KIs in some of the most severely affected hromadas of Donetsk and Mykolayivska oblasts shows a certain level of desensitization to the conflict the longer it lasts.^{xiii}

ALARMING INTENSIFICATION OF ATTACKS AGAINST CIVILIANS AND CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Since February 2022, over **33,800 civilian casualties have been recorded**, including 11,284 killed and 22,594 injured, of which 2,109 are children, with the actual numbers of those killed and injured likely to be significantly higher. In May 2024, the number of civilian casualties was the highest since June 2023, due to increased attacks in Kharkivska region. Of the adults, men were disproportionately affected, accounting for 60% of casualties. 92% of civilian deaths were as a result of the use of **explosive weapons with wide area effects**, and 4% as a result of mines and explosive remnants of war. The use of long-range missiles and loitering munitions by the Russian Federation mean that virtually no areas of the country are safe from the hostilities^{xiv}.

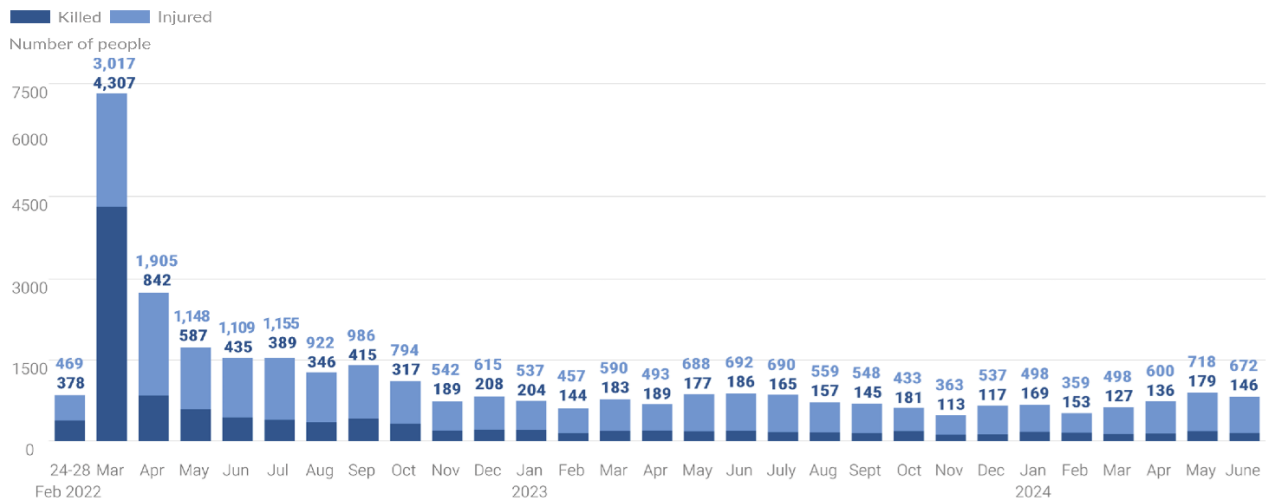


Figure 2: Civilians Casualties per Month Since February 2022, (OHCHR, June 2024)

The impact of these attacks has been profound, with extensive damage to critical infrastructure, severely impacting people’s access to healthcare, social protection, education, power and other basic services, as well as limiting their freedom of movement. The Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA3) from February 2024 estimates that up to **US\$152 billion (€138 billion) in direct damage to buildings and infrastructure** has resulted from the past two years of war. The most impacted sectors are housing (37% of total damage), transport (22%), commerce and industry (10%), energy (7%), and agriculture (7%), while social protection infrastructure such as residential care units or social service delivery centers have also been destroyed or damaged, impacting on access of vulnerable people to Government social services they require. Across all infrastructure sectors, the oblasts of Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Luhanska and Zaporizka, have sustained the greatest damage^{xv}. Since October 2022, the energy sector has sustained continued attacks on its infrastructure. March and April of 2024 saw **large-scale increase in attacks on energy infrastructure**, amounting to 65 attacks in Government-controlled territory and a further 13 in the occupied territories, posing threats to Ukraine’s power and transportation systems and temporarily disrupting access to electricity, gas and water^{xvi}. With specific increase in attacks renewed during the first half of 2024, these have deprived thousands of civilians of at least temporary access to electricity, water, heating and related essential services, posing additional risks for the winter season.^{xvii}

Over **10% of the total housing stock has been either damaged or destroyed, affecting close to 2 million households**. Over 75% of the damage is concentrated in four oblasts: Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhanska and Kyiv^{xviii}. The Health Cluster, through WHO and the WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care platform, verified a **480% increase in attacks on health care since December 2023**: there were 110 confirmed attacks on health care between 29 December 2023 and 30 April 2024, resulting in 11 deaths and 46 injuries to health care workers and patients. Overall, since February 2022, the Health Cluster has verified 1,742 attacks on health care, with 136 deaths and 311 injuries recorded^{xix}. Since February 2022, **280 education facilities have been destroyed**, with a further 958 damaged^{xx}. Schools account for most of the damage (53%), with destruction concentrated in eastern and southern oblasts. Whilst many educational institutions generally continue to operate online, destruction of schools has increased pressure on caregivers and limited their labour market participation, especially given that many children are still doing home schooling^{xxi}. In the transport sector, damaged or destroyed assets include **8,400 km of roads, over 290 bridges and more than 50 km of railways lines^{xxii}**, exacerbated by fewer public transport connections in rural frontline areas. Similarly, since 11 July 2023, dozens of **attacks on port facilities, grain silos and vehicles for agricultural transport**, including in Odeska and Mykolaivska oblasts and alongside the Danube River, have disrupted grain production and export in territories under Ukrainian control.

On May 10th, 2024, Russian armed forces a cross-border ground offensive, seized control of several villages in the north of Kharkivska oblast, resulting in displacement of over 18,000 people^{xxiii}. Simultaneously, Kharkiv city continued to come under airstrikes, which further intensified after May 10th. People fleeing from these areas had to shelter for days in cold, dark basements, with no electricity, while there has been massive damage to people’s homes and other civilian infrastructure^{xxiv}.

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS LIVING UNDER OCCUPATION

The attempted illegal annexation of areas in the occupied Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions by the Russian Federation on 30th September 2022 led to the *de facto* and complete imposition of Russian political, legislative and administrative systems in the occupied territories. Despite ongoing challenges to access information on those exposed to risks living in these areas, some data is available, including reports by OHCHR detailing the use of violence and repression, amounting to violations of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, with a cumulative effect of creating a generalized climate of fear affecting the lives of civilians. This includes **killings, torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, random violence and intimidation, deportations and forced transfers, as well as stifled freedom of expression and restricted access to information carried out in an environment of impunity**^{xxv}. From February 2022 to May 2023, OHCHR recorded 864 cases of arbitrary detention perpetrated by the Russian Federation, many of them amounting to forced disappearances. Widespread torture and ill-treatment in places of detention is also documented, including findings that of 178 civilian detainees, 91% had been tortured or ill-treated^{xxvi}. The protection of civilians in the occupied territories and respect of their human rights continues to be of significant concern, compounded by a **severely restricted access by humanitarians to the affected population**. There have also been measures imposed by the Russian Federation to restrict the civic space and limit fundamental freedoms within the occupied territories in the form of **suppressing Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages and cultural identities**, including disruption, restriction or banning the use of these languages in education, media and other spheres of life.

Further information on protection risks faced by the population living in the occupied territories is severely lacking, with needs often inferred from situations on the side of the frontline controlled by the Government of Ukraine, rather than from data coming out of the occupied territories. While protection actors work to systematically document violations against civilians, including children, the scale of some of these violations is difficult to determine based on both the sensitivity of the topic and limited accessibility.

COLLECTIVE SITES AND CONSOLIDATION PROCESS

As of June 2024, an estimated 85,808 IDPs in Ukraine reside in over 1,900 Collective Sites (CSs), with higher proportions in the Western and Central parts of the country that are farther from the frontlines. CSs often accommodate highly vulnerable IDPs, with **93% hosting older people, 62% hosting persons with disabilities and 34% female-headed households**^{xxvii}, **many at risk of various forms of GBV**^{xxviii}. Over 60% of CSs require rehabilitation (59% with Shelter needs and 67% with WASH needs), repairs or construction work to improve sub-standard conditions, as well as to accommodate vulnerable people requiring specific infrastructure or space configurations, primarily accessible infrastructure for people with disabilities, older people or others with low mobility, as well as infrastructure to improve privacy and security of women and children to reduce the risk of GBV.

Most CSs are located in education, health facilities or other non-housing stock, intending to serve as temporary accommodation during waves of mass displacement until longer-term, affordable alternative housing can be identified. Recognizing that a significant number of IDPs in CSs are not able to return to their places of origin due to ongoing conflict or damaged and destroyed property, CSs have continued to host IDPs long-term, requiring community-based interventions to enhance access of these IDPs to humanitarian and government services and step up their participation in joint initiatives with host communities.

On 1 September 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) adopted the Resolution 930, which among other things includes provisions on site definition, procedures for site ‘legalization’ and closure, minimum standards for living conditions, security of tenure, responsibilities of authorities and site managers and rights and obligations of IDPs residents. **The implementation of Resolution 930 is expected to lead to the closure of non-compliant sites** (more under risk 5 – page 14). At the same time, recent displacement from Donetska, Kharkivska and Sumska oblasts in May 2024 demonstrates the continuous need for accommodation for IDPs, including temporary spaces for new IDPs in the CSs and investments in barrier-free environments for place people with disabilities and low mobility in appropriate conditions.

STEADY EROSION OF COPING CAPACITIES IMPACTING THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS

The war and a multitude of subsequent protection concerns have had the hardest effects on the most vulnerable among the population, including **people with disabilities, older people, children, women and men at heightened risk, LGBTQI+ people and other groups at risk of exclusion**, such as the Roma community, further exacerbating pre-existing inequalities and protection risks. The number of older people and people with disabilities continue to grow in Ukraine, with an estimated 3 million people living with a disability, an estimated 2.6 million of whom need humanitarian assistance. Around **20% of IDP families are reported to have at least one member with a disability**, and over 50% have at least one family member over 60

years old^{xxxix}. Many older people and people with disabilities face several intersecting challenges that put them at risk, which are exacerbated by the context of the war. Particularly in frontline areas, they face a higher exposure to attacks. Factors such as lower mobility mean that they may be unable to flee from hostilities, as suitable transport options may be unavailable, or family members are not around to support their movement. They may also struggle to easily access bomb shelters, or to exit their homes, for example when elevators are unavailable during power outages. During the significant increase in hostilities in Kharkivska oblast between 10–25 May at least 35 civilians have been killed and 137 injured^{xxx}, **more than half were over the age of 60**, reflecting the disproportionate number of older people in border and frontline areas unable or unwilling to leave their homes even amid increased violence.

Access to services for vulnerable people to meet their basic needs also often presents a myriad of challenges, including access to information caused by *inter alia* issues with connection and electricity (especially in frontline areas) and access to credible forms of information. Furthermore, where vulnerable people remain in remote, often rural and underserved areas, they face challenges to access medical and social services, transport services, as well as humanitarian aid. Where people with disabilities and older people are able to flee, accommodation after evacuation is a great challenge, including the overburden of the health and elderly care systems, as well as the establishment of new places of suitable accommodation in host communities.

As the war continues, **pre-existing gender and intersectional inequalities** have also further increased the vulnerability of groups at higher risk of exclusion such as **LGBTQI+ people, Roma community, and undocumented people**. The war in Ukraine is not gender neutral, with the invasion seeing women and men playing distinct and specific roles and affecting both groups in different ways. Women are often the sole providers for their families while facing loss of income, family separation, and massive disruptions in the provision of essential services. At the same time, many men are engaged in the more direct war efforts on the frontlines, exposing themselves to potential death, severe injuries and mental health distress, and may be seen resorting to negative coping mechanisms, such as self-restricting their movements or avoiding to access services and assistance due to fear of conscription. Adolescent girls have taken on more unpaid care work to support women in coping with the increased responsibility of care for children and family members^{xxxi}.

RISK 1

Restrictions to Freedom of Movement, Forced Displacement, and Induced Returns

Induced Returns in Adverse Circumstances

As of February 2024, just 5% of IDPs shared that they have the intention to return to their place of origin in the next 12 months, with 68% stating that they hope to return one day. **A growing uncertainty is observed as displacement continues**, with IDPs who were previously planning to return but did not attribute this to the security situation in areas of return (76%), concerns around economic opportunities (6%) and damaged or inaccessible property (7%)^{xxxii}. The highest return rates have been recorded in Kyivska, Chernihivska, Dnipropetrovska and Kharkivska Oblasts.

47% of IDPs have conducted short-term visits to their place of origin in Ukraine with the main reason for the visits to check or repair their property, followed by visiting relatives and for getting personal belongings. Return to areas under active hostilities indicates the significance of sentimental returns, as well as a possible fatigue attached to protracted displacement, over two years since the February 2022 invasion. The protracted nature of displacement has been compounded by an increasing lack of financial means and shrinking availability of humanitarian assistance, particularly in West and Center, which may now also be exacerbated for some IDPs due to the cuts in the IDP allowance payments. Among IDPs, a small proportion indicate they have been compelled to return due to facing challenges in areas of displacement, with **problems finding stable accommodation or not able to access work opportunities** the most frequently reported reasons^{xxxiii}. As per the 2023 PMT findings, the main reasons for departure to the place of origin or another place of displacement: 1) lack of access to livelihood, employment and economic opportunities; and 2) lack of access to safe and dignified shelter. Furthermore, there were instances of thefts or robberies reported by the PMT key informants in Sumska, Kharkivska and Dnipropetrovska oblasts, prompting displaced people to return to insecure areas for the fear of losing property and belongings.^{xxxiv}

Many of those who return continue to face protection risks, compounded by the impact that the conflict has had on community life and infrastructure. Risks faced by returnees include exposure to attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, with 43% of returnees (over 1,070,000 individuals) residing in a location which had seen missile strikes, shelling and long-range attacks in the previous month. Furthermore, up to 38% of returnees were residing in areas where only some people looking for employment could find suitable job opportunities, in many cases undermining returnees' ability to meet the basic needs for themselves and their families. 62% (over 1,500,000 individuals) reported that at least half of residents in their locations had to reduce the amount of food and NFIs in their households^{xxxv}. Lack of access to livelihoods is reported in the PMT as particularly severe in Kharkivska and Khersonska oblasts, where there are both returns and new displacement following the

evacuations, while returnees are reported reside in destroyed, unfinished or uninhabitable buildings mostly in Kharkivska, Khersonska and Kyivska oblasts.^{xxxvi}

Self-Imposed Confinement

On 18 May 2024 a new law on mobilization entered into force in Ukraine, reducing the conscription age from 27 to 25 years old and the obligation to update military records of all citizens liable for military service. Household surveys show that male citizens reporting barriers to freedom of movement included fear of conscription as a significant obstacle (30%). In Kharkiv and Donetsk oblasts, there is a clear trend of **men of conscription age restricting their movements**, particularly avoiding areas near checkpoints due to concerns of receiving summons to recruitment centres^{xxxvii}. In the community-level protection monitoring, fear of conscription was mentioned as a barrier to freedom of movement in Chernivetska, Odeska, Sumska and Kharkivska oblasts.^{xxxviii} The fear of conscription and consequent **'self-imposed confinement'** contribute to distress experienced by men at risk of conscription and increase the potential for resorting to negative coping mechanisms, impacting both them and family members who may have remained with them. Restrictions on freedom of movement in this way may result in men facing barriers to accessing employment opportunities, humanitarian assistance as well as state services. This can also negatively impact women and other family members who may have to take on additional responsibilities outside of the household (e.g. taking children to school, shopping, visiting family).

Evacuations

Mandatory evacuation orders from border areas have resulted in the movements of civilians both within their own oblasts, and to other regions of the country. In Kharkivska and Sumska oblasts, most evacuations occurred to other areas within these regions, whilst from Donetsk, Khersonska and Zaporizka oblasts evacuations occurred mostly to other regions. These evacuations are organized by Government authorities, and often supported by NGOs, CSOs and volunteers who also conduct humanitarian evacuations even when mandatory evacuations are not announced. In some cases, evacuations are also self-organised. Most recently, evacuations of civilians took place at larger scale as a result of the ground offensive and deterioration of the security situation in the north of Kharkivska oblast in May 2024. According to data published by the Relief Coordination Center (RCC)¹, as of May 31st, a total of 3,853 individuals were evacuated and registered at the transit center in Kharkiv. Evacuations also continue from hotspot areas in Donetsk oblast, including state-organized evacuations to Rivnenska and Volynska oblasts.

Despite the deterioration of the security situation in these frontline areas, some people have not left due to a combination of factors, including high risks *en route*, the destruction of bridges and roads, landmines, and lack of means for safe exit. Some individuals do not have information about accommodation options or have concerns about the length of displacement as well as the quality of services that will be provided at the reception site, others do not want to leave their homes or livestock.^{xxxix}

Considering that humanitarian evacuations often occur from areas under active hostilities, people arrive at the place of displacement without ID documents. Sometimes issuance of such documents takes a long time and evacuees may consequently face **impediments in accessing medical, social and other services** provided by the State.

The most vulnerable groups may face difficulties evacuating safely, e.g. children and families may be at risk of separation during evacuations; women and girls may be exposed to increased risks of various forms of GBV, including sexual violence, trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse, as their physical well-being during evacuations mostly depends on external aid;

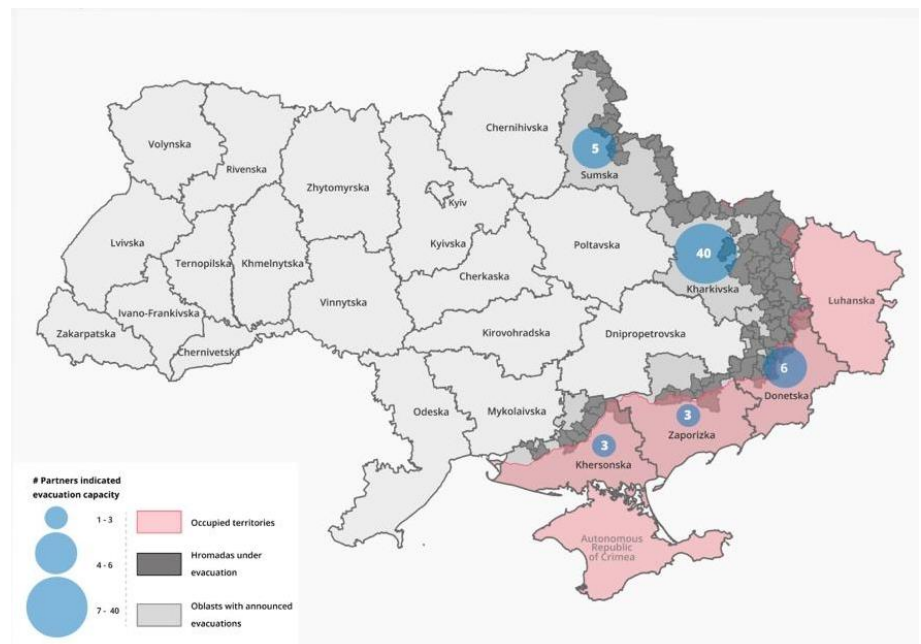


Figure 3: Hromadas under evacuation and oblasts announcing evacuations, including number of partners indicating evacuation capacity (as per available information from partners)

older persons or persons with disabilities may be left behind or - with very limited availability of home-based care or assisted living options - be unable to access suitable accommodation and necessary care and services. Furthermore, evacuation of older and disabled people residing in the institutions in the frontline oblasts poses very serious challenges. To support the Government efforts to address these pressing concerns, the Protection Cluster has engaged in a mapping of humanitarian partners' capacity to provide home-based care and assisted living social services, while the CCCM Cluster monitors a list of CSs where the premises are equipped with infrastructure for barrier-free access for people with low mobility. Protection partners have also advocated for better information dissemination on evacuations process and services available upon arrival, as well as for providing stepped-up referrals and counselling for evacuees arriving in destination areas, including the transit sites. Moreover, the Protection Cluster, GBV and Child Protection AoRs issued joint [lessons learned report](#) and recommendations based on feedback collected from operational partners in Kharkivska oblast. Finally, the Protection Cluster and Child Protection AoR in consultation with humanitarian partners, CSOs and volunteers issued a revised [Guidance on Humanitarian Evacuations with Special Considerations for Children](#), elaborating further protection risks, guiding principles and recommended actions related to humanitarian evacuations in Ukraine.

RISK 2 Children's Physical and Psychological Safety and Well-Being Threatened by Compounding Risks

The on-going war in Ukraine continues to have a devastating impact on children, with continuous violence, displacement, and worsening socioeconomic conditions. Against this backdrop, over 3.2 million children^{xi} in Ukraine endure multiple protection risks and violations of their rights on a daily basis and are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Protection risks are higher for children in frontline areas and along the Russian border, including Chernihivska, Donetsk, Kharkivska, Khersonska, Luhanska, Mykolaivska, Sumska and Zaporizka^{xii}. Children in Ukraine face grave dangers both physically and psychologically, with many having already witnessed or experienced acts of violence, including the sound and shock waves of explosions. Many children are showing signs of significant distress.

Shelling and bombing pose immediate threats to children's safety, development and life. In Mykolaivska Oblast, 28% of children have experienced such incidents, with girls aged 15-17 being the most affected group (35% compared to 21% of boys in the same age range). Similarly, in Dnipropetrovska Oblast, 25% of children reported these incidents, with girls aged 15-17 reporting a higher incidence rate (30% compared to 20% of boys)^{xiii}. The psychological impact on children is profound and caregivers continue to cite their children's mental health as a top concern^{xiiii}.

A combination of protection risks is impacting children and their caregiver's mental health and psychosocial well-being: children's own experiences of the conflict and the impact the violence has in their daily lives, along with repeated displacements, the loss of or separation from family members and friends, the dramatic deterioration in living conditions and lack of access to basic social services, health services, in-person education, and lack of socialization with their peers have often damaging physical, social and psychological consequences. These consequences risk having profound effects on their well-being and development both short and long term. Crises often also impact the well-being of caregivers', which can affect the ability to be a main source of protection, support and stability for their children, risking leaving children without entrusted adults to provide support and care. A representative survey revealed that 35% of Ukrainian respondents are experiencing poor well-being and quality of life^{xliv}, while UNICEF and Word Vision estimate 1.5 million children are at risk of

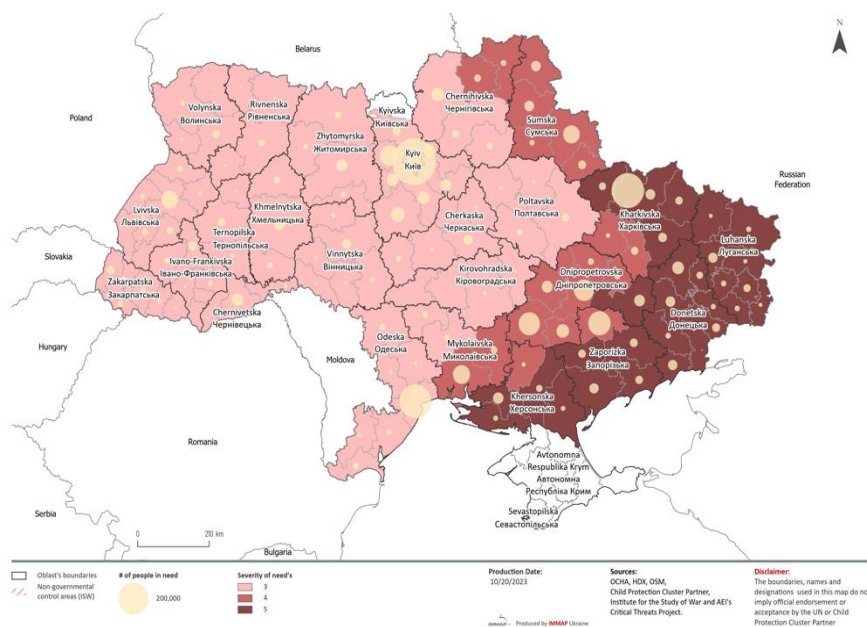


Figure 4: Child Protection Severity of Needs and PiN by Raion, October 2023

affected the ability to be a main source of protection, support and stability for their children, risking leaving children without entrusted adults to provide support and care. A representative survey revealed that 35% of Ukrainian respondents are experiencing poor well-being and quality of life^{xliv}, while UNICEF and Word Vision estimate 1.5 million children are at risk of

depression, PTSD, and other mental health issues. A CP Assessment in 2024, reveals high levels of psychosocial distress, with 84% identified mental and psychosocial wellbeing as risks to children in their location. 68% noted children worrying about the future, 28% believed that children were at risk of limited socialization, and 26% indicated children missing and worrying about displaced family/friends. The highest rates of distress were found in Mykolaivska (45%) and Khersonska (42%) regions. Urban areas had slightly higher rates of psychosocial distress compared to rural areas.

Family separation has become an increasingly concerning risk for children in Ukraine since the escalation of the war, with Ukrainian NGO Magnolia having received over 2,500 requests to find children who have gone missing since February 2022^{xlv}.

The 2024 Child Protection Assessment by REACH indicated that 36% of households consider family separation as a significant risk. The 2023 MSNA found that 2% of households across Ukraine reported at least one child under 18 years old not residing with them with higher percentages in the East (7% in Donetska, 5% in Khersonska, and 4% in Zaporizka and Kharkivska). Male-headed households were five times more likely to report a child not living with them, rising to eight times more likely in the East of the country. Common causes include loss of parents or caregivers, relocation, and sending children away for safety. Separation increases children's vulnerability to protection threats and may become permanent due to inadequate systems for family reunification. Many children left due to marriage, studying, or seeking safety, with 59% in the North and 56% in the East leaving to seek protection, highlighting a link to conflict zones^{xlvi}.

Killing or maiming due to the use of explosive weapons and the presence of landmines and other explosive ordnance in their communities is further exacerbating the conditions of children and their caregivers in the areas most affected. The conflict has caused significant damage to schools and hospitals, disrupting children's access to education and healthcare services. In 2023 alone, the UN verified 938 grave violations against 543 children in Ukraine (309 boys, 204 girls, and 30 sex unknown)^{xlvii}. Between 24 February 2022 to June 2024, OHCHR recorded 33,878 civilian casualties as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Of these casualties, 2,109 were children (622 killed and 1,487 injured). The killing and maiming of children has predominantly been caused by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects and explosive ordnances^{xlviii}. However, overall casualty figures are believed to be higher due to a high number of pending reports of civilian casualties, especially from areas like Mariupol (Donetska) as well as in Lysychansk, Popasna, and Sievierodonetsk (Luhanska) in the occupied territories, outside the reach of many international actors. Returnee households in frontline areas reported being affected by explosive ordnance as a safety hazard for children twice as often as displaced households, with particularly high reports in Kharkivska, Khersonska, and Mykolaivska oblasts. Awareness campaigns have been conducted to educate children on how to identify and respond to explosive hazards. However, the 2024 Child Protection Assessment conducted by REACH indicate, many respondents (23%) were still unsure whether such hazards were present in their areas. Over half of the households reported that their children knew how to identify and act upon finding explosive ordnance, with higher awareness in rural areas. The ongoing conflict continues to place children at risk of injury or death from these hazards.

Attacks on schools and hospitals put children in grave danger and often severely impact their immediate and longer-term protection and well-being. Many educational and healthcare facilities have been damaged, destroyed, or repurposed for military use. In 2023 alone, UN verified a total of 335 attacks on schools (243) and hospitals (92), mostly involving explosive weapons with wide area effects^{xlix}. Further reports from 2023 confirm continued repurposing of civilian facilities for military use, for example children's health centres, schools, and maternity hospitals in Luhanska and Zaporizka. The constant threat of military hostilities has caused significant psychological stress, anxiety, and long-term mental health issues among children. In Mykolaivska and Zaporizka oblasts, there have been reported cases of children injured due to bombing and shelling. The lack of bomb shelters, especially in educational institutions, further exacerbates the risk and hinder in-person learning, often necessitating online education. This limits children's social interactions and learning opportunities, and impacts access to education as the online modality relies on internet connectivity, which is being impacted by power cuts, including due to attacks on energy infrastructure.

Children living in institutions and without parental care face increased challenges due to the impact of the war, including access to social services. Providing vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, with better care in a safe and nurturing family-type environment is crucial for their well-being and development. Prior to the war, Ukraine had the highest number of children in institutional care in Europe, with nearly half of them being children with disabilities. Children with disabilities in institutions were particularly at-risk as many were not included in evacuation plans and the reduced capacity of staff further hindered their care. While a significant number of children have been reunified with family members, the war and mass displacement have exposed, and exacerbated, risks faced by children of family separation, with a heightened risk for children in institutions.

RISK 3

Gender-Based Violence, with Heightened Risks of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for Trafficking, Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of GBV

An estimated 2.5 million vulnerable IDPs, returnees and non-displaced people are at high risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and in need for immediate and continuous lifesaving GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response action across Ukraine. **The prolongation of the full-scale war, deterioration of the security context, falling economic opportunities and other effects of the war has heightened risks of intimate partner violence (IPV), conflict related sexual violence (CRSV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), trafficking in human beings, sexual harassment and other forms of GBV.**

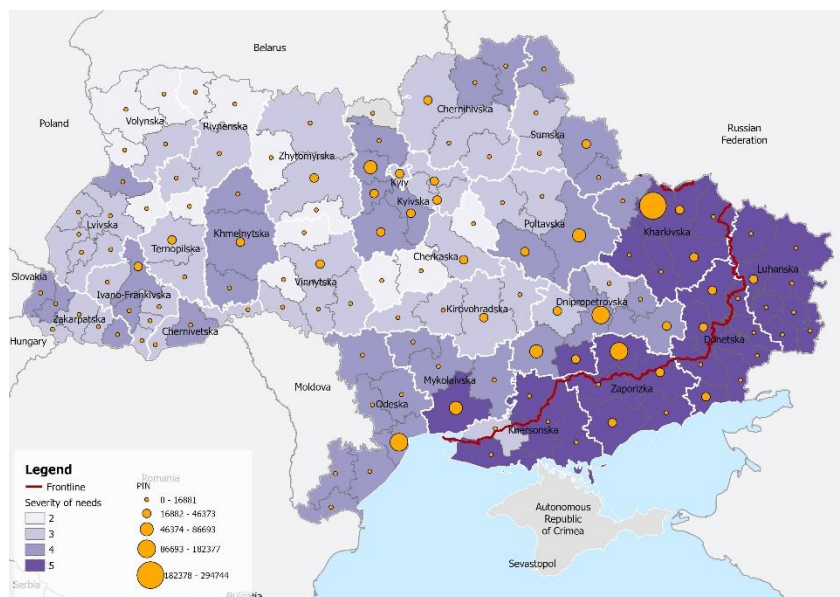


Figure 5: GBV AoR Severity of needs and PIN, HNRP 2024

Since February 2022, predominantly women and girls but also men and boys of all ages and diverse backgrounds have been subject to GBV in war-affected Ukraineⁱ. Those at the highest risks of violence include: women of all ages and girls residing in close proximity to the frontline areas in the north, south and east of Ukraine; internally displaced women and girls in collective sites, particularly located in remote/hard to reach areas or those on the move passing transit centres, returnees with exhausted financial resources, particularly to the retaken areas or closer to the frontline where civilian infrastructure is destroyed; women and girls with disabilities or living with HIV/AIDS and struggling to access services and support, women and girls, boys and men trapped in the occupied territories; women supporting the Ukrainian response as soldiers/armed actors and partners of current or former

combatants; women and men prisoners of war, particularly those detained by the Russian military; Roma people who have experienced historical discrimination and continue to do so during Russia's war on Ukraineⁱⁱ; and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (SOGI) who experience discrimination and harassment from armed actors and are often denied passage out of Ukraine.

The General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine and the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine have documented cases of CRSV perpetrated by the Russian military against women, men, girls and boys including "persons with diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities, race and ethnicity, as well as persons living with disabilities, ranging in age from 3 to 70 years". In majority of cases of incidents involving adult male survivors, sexual violence was documented as a method of torture that included "rape, threats of rape against victims and their relatives, electric shocks and beatings to the genitals, electric shocks to the breast, threats of castration, genital mutilation, unwanted touching, forced stripping and nudity"ⁱⁱⁱ.

Women and girls remaining in the frontline areas in the north, south and east parts of Ukraine face consequences of drastically deteriorating security situation, limited or no access to livelihoods, psychological trauma caused by the war and lack of access to lifesaving interventions, including GBV services. In 2024, new waves of evacuations of vulnerable population from the frontline areas where hostilities intensified, resulted in an **increased number of displaced women and girls passing through transit centres and/or placed in collective centres. They faced increased risks of GBV due to "lack of privacy and single sex accommodation in Collective Sites (CSs)"^{liii}.** In their new locations, IDP women and children of all ages often have to deal with limited or no access to life-saving services and livelihood opportunities. An assessment in the northern regions revealed particular vulnerability of "adolescent girls from IDP households, especially those from economically marginalized households at increased risk of exploitation. The impact of displacement and economic vulnerability exacerbates their risk of the adoption of negative mechanisms, including sexual exploitation and exploitative relationships, as a way to access basic needs"^{liv}.

GBV Safety Audits (UNHCR 2023, and GBV AoR together with CCCM Cluster, and with the participation of Wash, Health, Protection and Shelter in 2024) revealed **multiple challenges faced by IDPs residing in Collective Sites (CSs), notably that**

Contamination remains a significant risk for people going about daily activities, including those in newly accessible areas and children during recreational activities. **Individuals living in communities along the border with the Russian Federation and in the occupied territories Federation are at severe risk.** The demographic impact is notable, with men (80%) and boys (10%) representing 90% of civilian casualties. Farmers are particularly affected, with 128 casualties since February 2022, highlighting the profound impact on agriculture and rural livelihoods. This high casualty rate among farmers also indicates a critical need for targeted risk education and clearance operations in agricultural areas to ensure the safety and continuity of food production. Groups who face barriers to communication and/or accessing information may have reduced awareness of high-risk areas. For example, mine risks and UXO are usually denoted by visual warnings (tape or signs) which put those with visual impairments at a significant disadvantage. Children compared to adults may have less developed risk awareness, are naturally more curious, and can be more attracted to shiny objects. Cluster munitions, which are prevalent in Ukraine, are particularly problematic as they break-up into small butterfly-like shapes.

Further, mines and unexploded ordnance are particularly deadly for children. Blast and fragmentation injuries often cause long-lasting impairments including limb amputations, loss of eyesight and hearing, severe injuries to genitals, internal organs, face and chest, brain damage and spinal cord damage. These physical injuries are aggravated by the psychosocial, socio-economic and protection consequences of the traumatic event of a blast accident as the survivors confront lifelong difficulties accessing education, livelihood opportunities and, like many vulnerable children with disabilities, are subject to violence, abuse and exploitation. Children who lose a family member as a result of a mine/ERW blast, or who are living in a family with an adult survivor, also face considerable challenges from the loss or impairment of a care giver or the household breadwinner.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Mine Action capacity in Ukraine has significantly increased. There are now a total of 42 certified operators, including 14 humanitarian operators comprising both national and international NGOs. This expanded capacity reflects a concerted effort to address the contamination problem more effectively. However, the scale of contamination still presents a daunting challenge that requires continuous support and resources. This is the reason the Government of Ukraine has developed and adopted in June 2024 the strategy for Mine Action and an operational plan that will cover the next three years. Indeed, the increased number of operators is a positive development, yet the efficiency and coordination among these entities are crucial for the success of mine clearance and risk education programs. Efforts must be aligned to ensure comprehensive coverage and to avoid duplication of work, maximizing the impact of available resources. Moreover, continuous training and support for these operators are essential to maintain high standards of safety and effectiveness in mine action operations. The inclusion of advanced technology and equipment also plays a vital role in enhancing the efficiency of demining efforts and ensuring the safety of demining personnel.

While significant strides have been made in increasing Mine Action capacity, **the ongoing threat of contamination requires sustained and coordinated efforts.** The focus must remain on reducing the risk to the population, providing adequate support to victims, and ensuring that all affected areas with high density of populations and livelihoods are eventually cleared of mines and UXOs.

RISK 5

Impediments and/or Restrictions to Access to Legal Identity, Remedies and Justice

Civil Documentation and Access to Social Assistance

Constraints to access to legal identity, remedies and justice remain widespread across Ukraine, primarily related to a lack of personal and civil documentation. **Displacement and conflict often result in the loss or destruction of personal and civil documentation** - and archives in registries, where such information is stored. Lack of documentation and other means to prove one's identity can have serious consequences for individuals and communities, including restricted freedom of movement, limited access to life-saving services, access to social benefits, and denial of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights. Additionally, the lack of access to civil documentation impacts access to justice and to essential services such as legal, health, education, and livelihoods. People with disabilities, limited literacy, limited state documentation, and/or communication challenges due to language differences (such as Roma community), may face barriers to accessing their rights. Those with additional learning needs or mental health issues may also require assistance in navigating legal rights and state assistance.

In Ukraine, a lack of documentation and / or capacity of relevant Administrative Service Centres or Government Departments to assess eligibility criteria of specific vulnerable groups may hinder their access to certain services. In March 2022, to address the internal displacement caused by the escalation of the war and provide social support to vulnerable IDPs, the CMU introduced an IDP allowance (Resolution 332). The monthly allowance is granted to those IDPs who are (re-)displaced after 1 January 2022 from the frontline and occupied territories, IDPs whose housing has been damaged or destroyed and the children of IDPs, with an increased amount for people with disabilities and children. Before 1 March 2024, an estimated 2.5 million IDPs were receiving the allowance, and on 1 March 2024, with a view to shifting from blanket to targeted approach, the Cabinet of

Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) approved a new round of amendments that designate 10 vulnerable categories^{lvii} of IDPs who can continue receiving the IDP allowance for the next 6-month period, resulting in some 800,000 non-vulnerable IDPs of working age ceasing to receive it. The Protection Cluster, in close collaboration with national NGOs and the Ministry of Social Policy, successfully advocated for an increase in the number of vulnerable groups to 15 to guarantee governmental monetary support to those most in need.

The Protection Cluster along with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group and Humanitarian Country Team has undertaken other measures to monitor and mitigate the potential impact on IDPs. Specifically, the Protection Cluster launched a monitoring tool to track the impact of changes in payments of the IDP allowance, including risks related to the: **inability to attain basic needs, evictions or development of negative coping mechanisms such as returns to unsafe areas or move to Collective Sites**^{lviii}. Additionally, procedural impediments for extension of the payment, such as long queues, lack of information, inability to verify eligibility of people with disabilities for the automatic extension of the payment in certain cases, were identified^{lix}. Delays or termination of these payments to IDPs may not only impact them economically, but also exacerbate their existing vulnerabilities or intensify social disputes. Hence, while the targeted, needs-based approach to the IDP allowance scheme needs to be promoted, further attention to the impact of these policy changes is required, given that the current extension of eligibility for 15 vulnerable categories expires on 31 August 2024.

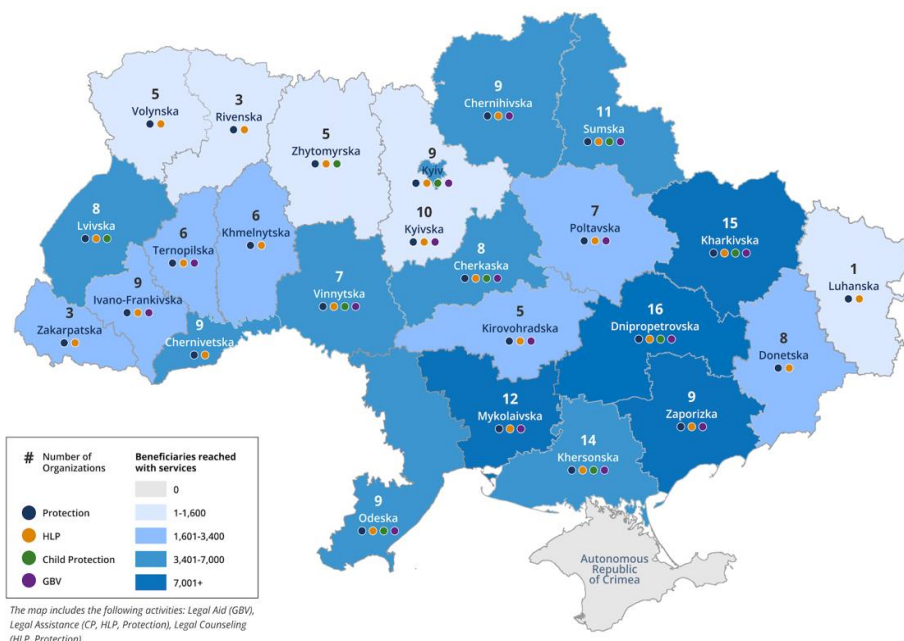


Figure 7: Protection Cluster Legal Assistance Provision Jan – May 2024

Access to Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Rights and Remedies

Inability to access HLP rights have led to profound challenges and displacement for civilians impacted by the conflict. In circumstances where IDPs may face relocation or secondary displacement, the risk of violations of HLP rights increase. Returnees may also struggle to assert their right to restitution or compensation upon return, particularly when HLP documentation is lost. From February 2022 to December 2023, over 10% of the total housing stock in Ukraine was either damaged or destroyed, affecting nearly 2 million households. **The scale of this damage exacerbated an already existing shortage of adequate, affordable, and safe housing in Ukraine and particularly presents severe challenges for IDPs**^{lx}. 47% of IDPs owned a house or apartment unit that was damaged or destroyed and 31% face a shortage of adequate accommodation in their current location. IDPs aged 60+, in particular, struggle to find housing^{lxi}.

The shortage of adequate and affordable housing has particularly impacted the most vulnerable IDPs, many of whom are renting their accommodation, residing in Collective Sites (CSs) or host families throughout Ukraine. While the Government of Ukraine has strengthened compliance of CSs to meet minimum standards, many sites have closed or will close and IDPs are facing eviction risk. In most cases, IDPs confronted with eviction are presented with options for relocation, however, illegal forced evictions by collective site owners have been documented^{lxii}. Overall, CS residents express concerns about CS closures and potential relocation to another CS, experiencing stress and uncertainty related to their current housing arrangements. Cases of forced eviction, including through closure of CSs, can also lead to disruption of support networks and impeded access to vital services, especially for people living with chronic disease and/ or disabilities. Protection actors collaborate closely with the CCCM Cluster to provide IDPs in CSs with the support and services they need to move out of CSs into more appropriate housing, whenever feasible. In some locations, rental market assistance is available for a 6-month period for persons living in CSs, offered by shelter actors in collaboration with HLP partners, while exploring viable exit strategies incorporating livelihoods programming. Advocacy is also ongoing with the Protection, CCCM, Shelter/NFI and Education clusters in conjunction with the Humanitarian Country Team and local and central authorities regarding planning for dignified, affordable, alternative housing

options and other support for durable solutions. In this regard, the Ministry of Social Policy is working on initiating the state rental subsidy scheme, which can contribute to alleviating these challenges.

From May 2023, under Law No. 2932-IX, the **Government of Ukraine compensation mechanism for damaged and destroyed housing (eVidnovlennia - eRecovery) has been operational and more than 100,000 Ukrainian families have applied for compensation**. 54,000 families have received funds to repair their damaged homes. 7,000 families were issued housing certificates for their destroyed homes and 3,000 families have used those certificates to purchase new homes. The total amount of disbursed compensation funds exceeded UAH 11 billion (USD 275 million). Most applications for compensation for damaged and destroyed housing come from residents of Kharkivska, Kyivska, Donetska, Mykolaivska, Chernihivska and Khersonska oblasts^{lxiii}. Despite the positive results of the E-Recovery programme, many Ukrainians with damaged and destroyed housing cannot participate due to lack of necessary documents. Most notably, persons who own property that is not registered in the State Register of Real Property Rights cannot apply for compensation. In some cases, registration is possible based on available technical documentation or other records, however the process is long and costly. In other cases, the property archives that could prove ownership – and thus eligibility to apply for compensation – have been destroyed or are otherwise inaccessible. Judicial procedure still could be used, but fees are high, and effectiveness of intervention depends on provision of qualified legal aid. HLP legal assistance partners have recommended a streamlining of the procedure to officially register properties and have highlighted other procedures (e.g., longer filing periods for compensation) that should be adopted.

Shelter assistance actors – humanitarian, development, and private organizations – can and **support light, medium and some heavy repairs to persons who cannot access compensation**. Legal aid actors provide information, counselling and legal assistance on compensation procedures and other HLP issues. Finally, the Law No. 2923-IX and its operational resolutions have evolved since its inception in May-June 2023. This evolution has expanded eligibility in some areas, increased maximum limits for compensation relief, and has clarified the law to ensure that shelter repair interventions do not negatively impact an eligible person's opportunity to apply for and receive compensation.

Occupied Territories

The **constraints to access to civil documentation for residents in the occupied territories** remain serious and widespread, primarily with regard to undocumented births and deaths, with hundreds of thousands of children reportedly born in the occupied territories without a birth certificate. Cheap, fast and efficient administrative procedures for the registration of births and deaths is unavailable to residents of these territories, who are forced to apply to a court for registration documentation. Following the illegal so-called referendums, the systems imposed by the Russian authorities in occupied territories have, as a practical matter, effectively compelled people to obtain Russian citizenship in order to access necessary services. Residents who retain their Ukrainian citizenship are at **risk of exclusion from social protection schemes, including health insurance and pensions** from the Russian Federation, leaving them uniquely vulnerable. There are also regular reports of threats of physical and bodily harm from the Russian armed forces should Ukrainians fail to obtain Russian citizenship. There are also protection concerns related to recent announcements by the Russian Federation in the occupied territories, namely Donetska, Khersonska, Luhanska and Zaporizka oblasts, that owners of housing must register their ownership in the Russian Federation Unified State Register of Real Estate or **risk seizure of their property by the Russian Federation authorities**. Due to this announcement, there are concerns that Ukrainian citizens will return to the occupied territories to preserve their right of ownership and thus be exposed to protection risks.^{lxiv}

Compensation mechanisms do not currently include properties damaged and destroyed in areas beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine and housing damaged or destroyed before 24 February 2022. However, there are initiatives in the form of a recently submitted draft law to include this possibility. The Government of Ukraine recently undertook a **pilot project using remote sensing information equipment to confirm the destruction of housing** in the occupied territories of Melitopol and there are calls to scale up this project and extend it to other occupied areas, such as Mariupol^{lxv}.

RESPONSE

PROGRESS MADE ON PROTECTION

From January to May 2024, over **180 protection partners** responded to the protection needs of over **2,3 million people (13% men, 41% women, 46% children, 5% persons with disabilities and 16% older persons)**. **52%** of persons reached were from the so-called “crescent oblasts”: Chernihivska, Donetsk, Kharkivska, Khersonska Mykolaivska, Odeska, Sumska, and Zaporizka oblasts, with the top protection services and assistance provided in awareness raising and information dissemination (including CP, EORE, GBV and protection), PSS, protection and legal counselling, legal assistance, support through Women's and Girls Spaces, transportation to support evacuations and access to services, and community-based protection. Close to 120,000 girls, boys, women and men at risk benefitted from specialized protection services, including child protection and GBV, such as case management, social rehabilitation, protection cash and vouchers, and legal assistance.

As of May 2024, **173 Child Protection** partners have reached a total of 692,839 individuals (21 % women and 39 % girls with the total reach) including **506,256 children (53% girls)** with critical child protection prevention and response services. These services include MHPSS, child-friendly legal assistance, case management, family tracing and reintegration, cash for child protection outcomes, child protection messaging and transport. A total of **26,937 children** with protection concerns were identified, registered, assessed, and provided with direct, individualized support and referrals based on a case plan tailored to their specific needs. Additionally, 5,236 children and caregivers provided with cash assistance to address child and/or family/household-level child protection needs. As of May 2024, **82 Gender-Based Violence partners reported provision of services to 261,500 people** (91% female, 9% male, including 15% children, 68% adults and 17% older people) survivors and those at high risk of gender-based violence who were in need of immediate and continuous life-saving risk prevention, mitigation, and response. Life-saving assistance was provided through GBV case management and referrals to specialised GBV and health care services, mobile and static PSS and legal support, rehabilitation at women's and girl's safe spaces, awareness raising and information dissemination on preventive action and survivor support, CVA for GBV prevention and response, dignity kits and crisis accommodation through safe shelters and crises rooms. The capacity of service providers was continuously supported to bring quality of services in line with the survivor-centred approach. **12 Mine Action** partners have reached **596,885 people** (69% children), mostly with Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, inc. in educational institutions. 18,372 people have benefitted from land clearance.

Localization has been at the forefront of protection response in Ukraine, ensuring strong engagement with the authorities at central, regional and local levels, particularly with the Ministry of Reintegration, Ministry of Social Policy, and Ministry of Justice; capacity building; translation of cluster and AoRs' documents and meetings in Ukrainian, [working with the IDP Councils](#); and day-to-day involvement of local actors, including Civil Society Organizations and volunteers, for example through the organization of the Protection Cluster Peer-to-Peer event for national humanitarian actors conducting evacuations in April 2024. Protection Cluster and Mine Action AoR have national non-government organizations as Co-Coordinator. The Child Protection AoR has consistently prioritized localization efforts in child protection, including localizing the 7 sub-national/regional coordination in the east and south regions, led by NGO partners, and capacity building for national and local actors. A Resource Mobilization Help Desk has been established to assist national and local organizations in applying for funding through the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF) for child protection programs. A localization survey has been launched to gather essential data for establishing a baseline and creating a tailored action plan for the Ukraine CP AoR's localization initiatives, supporting local organizations in accessing funding for child protection programs.

ACCESS-RELATED CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Humanitarian access in Ukraine continues to be primarily driven by war dynamics. **The escalation of hostilities and deteriorating security environment limits the ability of humanitarian actors to access** people in need in locations close to the front line, and attacks affecting civilian infrastructure across the country impact humanitarian actors' capacity to operate. In May 2024, changes in the operational environment, such as the Russian cross-border ground offensive in Kharkivska oblast, increases in strikes against Kharkiv City and the border areas of Sumska oblast, and advances by the Russian Federation in Donetsk oblast have increased the need for humanitarian assistance and thus humanitarian presence.. The military mobilization of humanitarian staff is flagged by many humanitarian actors as an important access constraint, limiting humanitarian activities. Incidents involving conscription of humanitarian workers and volunteers are believed to be underreported. A total of 51 access incidents were reported between January-April 2024, including 11 of violence impacting humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities, mostly in frontline oblasts.^{lxvi} Access barriers for humanitarians include extreme restrictions to access to the territories

occupied by the Russian Federation. Shifting frontlines have caused progressive loss of access to provide services to those with increasing humanitarian needs living in the occupied areas, e.g. in Avdiivka in Donetsk oblast in February 2024.

According to OCHA, 18,625 people in Donetsk Oblast and 17,160 in Kharkivska oblast are reported to remain in areas with very limited humanitarian access as of June 2024. **Many of those remaining are very vulnerable, including older people and people with disabilities** who lack access to services they need and their community support networks.^{lxvii} Humanitarian protection actors, including child protection and GBV partners, are able to provide very limited services and assistance in proximity to the frontline due to insecurity and protection reasons. Thus, ensuring the do-no harm approach in delivery of limited assistance through the last mile delivery actors is challenging.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the period covered by this analysis, urgent action is required to stop the recorded increase in violence and exploitation and advance the implementation of the HCT Centrality of Protection Strategy for Ukraine issued in 2023. Furthermore, the Protection Cluster, including its Areas of Responsibility and Working Groups, as well as partners consider the here listed actions necessary to avoid further harmful consequences:

RISK 1

Restrictions to Freedom of Movement, Forced Displacement, and Induced Returns

PROTECTION CLUSTER AND PARTNERS

- Strengthen available data on demographics and push and pull factors for returns to unsafe areas and engage the Government in relation to parameters for safe returns.
- Work with CCCM Cluster to better understand the profiles of vulnerable people in need of protection services and assistance in West and Center of the country, in particular those in CSs in West and Center (what barriers they are facing to leave the CSs and gaps they are exposed to in accessing specialized services), so as to advocate for responsible transition to the Government and development actors in these areas.
- Follow the principles and recommendations included in the Protection Cluster Guidance on [Humanitarian Evacuations of Civilians in Ukraine with Special Considerations for Children](#).
- Continue to bolster the on-going efforts to disseminate reliable messaging on evacuation process and assistance available upon arrival in destination areas, so as to support the informed decision-making by people remaining in frontline areas.
- Support the identification of social safety nets and improved security measures for vulnerable groups, including women and men at risk, persons with disabilities, children and youth, LGBTQI+ persons, marginalized groups and older persons in frontline locations and/or upon arrival to evacuation destination. Engage with the local authorities and Health Cluster to strengthen the two-way referrals and ensure better access to specialized services for people with disabilities and low mobility during and after evacuations, and for those remaining in frontline areas.
- Advocate with humanitarian and development actors across the relevant sectors to support the Governments plans on evacuation of people with disabilities and people with low mobility residing in institutions in frontline oblasts.
- In collaboration with ICCG, advocate for evidenced-based and needs-driven delivery of humanitarian assistance in frontline areas.

These actions need to be complemented with a robust protection monitoring system with a solid capacity to identify groups at heightened risk and enable people-centred approach.

RISK 2

Children's Physical and Psychological Safety and Well-Being Threatened by Compounding Risks

GOVERNMENT and AUTHORITIES

- **Children must be protected from the six grave violations against children as well as other rights violations of their rights that may be occurring^{lxviii}.**

DONORS

- **Funds continue to be needed to deliver life-saving child protection programming:** The Child Protection AoR is seeking critical and immediate and long-term funding to fill gaps and ensure sustained child protection programming for children in Ukraine specially for the frontline oblasts.
- **Supporting specialised, standalone child protection interventions is also critical,** including for case management, particularly registration and referral services as well as psychosocial support, family tracing and reunification, return and reintegration service, where in the best interests of the child, and strengthening existing national child protection services.

CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR AND PARTNERS

- **Children's rights must be central to the response and their protection is everyone's responsibility.** It is critical to ensure that child protection needs are considered with an age, gender and disability perspective, ensuring strong integration across programmes alongside specialised standalone child protection responses.
- **Prioritizing the mental health and well-being of children** and their caregivers is crucial, and they need access to adequate support and resources. Multi-sectoral response programming should align with Child Protection and mental health and psychosocial minimum standards to ensure inclusive service delivery.
- Further improve the **quality and access to specialized child protection services**, including direct support or referrals, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas located in the North, South, and East of Ukraine, close to the frontline.
- Intensify awareness campaigns and educational programs to teach children and communities how to recognize and respond to explosive hazards. Ensure these programs are well-publicized and reach the most vulnerable populations.
- **Children should be highlighted as a unique affected population group, and child protection risks, and existing capacities** should be reflected in the situation analyses, highlighting specific needs by gender, age, and disability.

RISK 3

Gender-Based Violence, with Heightened Risks of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for Trafficking, Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of GBV

GOVERNMENT and AUTHORITIES

- **Enhance GBV initiatives:** advocate for donor support to enhance comprehensive initiatives addressing GBV, inc. domestic violence, focusing on shift of gender norms, and reintegrating war veterans into post-war society, while implementing the Istanbul Convention. Focus on community-driven prevention and support programs for veterans' families.
- **Support local GBV services:** Provide state subsidies for local GBV services, ensuring quality, capacity, sustainable funding, and community collaboration.
- **Develop service provider capacity:** In coordination with international and national non-governmental entities, establish sustainable mechanisms for continuous development of GBV service providers with standardized curricula and guidelines by the National Training Center on GBV Prevention.
- **Strengthen National GBV Management:** Develop legislation and tools for effective GBV case management.
- **Legislate for CRSV:** Amend laws to include Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) prevention and response, ensuring proper investigation and legal tools.
- **Ensure survivor accountability:** Integrate "accountability to affected populations" in policy planning and implementation, focusing on a survivor-centered approach.
- **Create national protocols:** Develop a national protocol for clinical management of rape (CMR) and intimate partner violence (IPV), emphasizing safety, confidentiality, and respect. Reform mandatory reporting policies, establish forensic evidence collection, and create a confidential data system for survivor support.

DONORS

- Continue funding organizations operating GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response activities in war affected Ukraine maintaining key focus of continuous and survivor centred services for GBV survivors and at-risk groups, awareness raising/access to life-saving information and strengthening capacity of GBV actors to deliver quality support.
- Target smooth nexus and availability of funding for humanitarian (before the need persists), developmental and state actors to ensure stable access and increased quality of GBViE interventions including emergency preparedness.
- Pay particular attention to the possibilities of strengthening capacity of WLO/WROs, regional and local authorities to cooperate and jointly deliver quality GBViE response.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SECTOR AND PARTNERS

- Continue close collaboration with state actors at national, regional and local levels to ensure complementarity of the humanitarian aid to the work of the government of Ukraine to prevent and respond against GBV during the emergency.
- Further improve quality, access and/or referrals to GBViE services particularly in remote, hard to reach close to the frontline areas located in the North, South and East of Ukraine.
- Ensure all vulnerable women, men, girls and boys including persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+, Roma women and girls and others have access to survivor-centered quality GBV services.
- Continue advancing capacity of GBV service provider organizations to deliver quality and coordinated assistance to survivors with the focus on Women Led and Women's Rights Organizations, organizations working with persons with disabilities, with Roma women and girls, LGBTQI+ survivors and other vulnerable categories.
- Improve understanding among humanitarian actors across sectors, including those delivering assistance in the frontline areas on how to mitigate GBV risks and observe do no harm principles if interacting with survivors.
- Continue raising awareness on GBV risks, preventive action and availability of GBV services to enable survivors and at-risk individuals' timely access to needed help.
- Further advocate with donors and other stakeholders on GBViE prevention, risk mitigation and response needs in Ukraine to ensure quality and coordinated assistance is non-interrupted and increasingly contributed by the national and local organizations.

RISK 4 Presence of Mine and Other Explosive Ordnance

PROTECTION CLUSTER AND PARTNERS

- Ensure the sustainability of support to Mine Action partners by focusing on developing the capacity of local NGOs.
- Provide Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) sessions tailored to the most affected groups, particularly farmers.
- Strengthen cohesion and coordination among mine action partners to ensure comprehensive coverage, avoid duplication of efforts, and maximize the impact of available resources.

RISK 5 Impediments and/or Restrictions to Access to Legal Identity, Remedies and Justice

GOVERNMENT and AUTHORITIES

- Improve administrative procedure for **birth and death registration for residents of occupied territories**, including exempting unconditionally from court fees on cases of birth and death registration.
- Amend the compensation law (Law No. 2023-IX) to include housing damaged and destroyed in areas beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine and housing that was damaged or destroyed before 24 February 2022
- Support for **inclusive compensation schemes**, including the eligibility of non-Ukrainian property owners who were legally entitled to be domiciled in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and victims of sexual violence, since the approach to victims/survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence should be particularly sensitive to their needs. The compensation scheme should extend to destroyed or damaged immovables other than residential housing, for instance garages, small corner shops, offices of individuals set up in apartments, etc, as well as damaged agricultural land (for instance, through mines, military movements, flooding, etc.). **A fair and transparent compensation mechanism**, with clear messaging on eligibility will increase social cohesion and strengthen the rebuilding of social fabric.
- Streamline the procedure to officially register residential properties in the State Register of Real Property Rights.
- Support the increase in capacity of local commissions in processing compensation claims.

- Based on the experience in the Melitopol project, scale up remote sensing information equipment to confirm the destruction of housing in the occupied territories.
- Ensure continuous access to social protection schemes, be it IDP allowance, rental subsidy or social services, of internally displaced people, guaranteeing that the most vulnerable do not “fall through the cracks”.

DONORS

- To address the impact of the changes in IDP allowance scheme, 1) support development programming to increase access to sustainable employment and livelihoods and access to affordable housing and alternative housing solutions so that IDPs affected by the changes to the IDP allowance policy do not “fall back into the humanitarian caseload”; 2) support the establishment of shock responsive social protection system, including access to government rental subsidies for the most vulnerable; 3) continue to support humanitarian partners (Protection, FSL, Shelter/NFI, CCCM and AAP WG), particularly with regards to targeted activities such as awareness raising, protection counselling and legal aid, protection capacity building, livelihoods, cash for rent.
- Increased resources for legal aid partners, to strengthen awareness of HLP rights, laws and policies among Ukrainian government officials, affected persons, and IDPs; and provide free legal assistance on HLP issues, including compensation schemes.

PROTECTION CLUSTER AND ITS PARTNERS

- To address the impact of changes in IDP allowance scheme: 1) increase advocacy and communication on the **impact of change in legislation** on those most affected by Resolution 332, based on the continued thematic protection monitoring; 2) step up awareness raising, legal counselling and aid to IDPs during the re-application process and upon rejection for extension of the IDP allowance, as well as support and capacity building to Departments of Social Policy and Administrative Service Centers; 3) advocate with donors, development actors and Government to strengthen employment schemes, social protection mechanisms, and to implement the rental subsidy programme.
- In complementarity to government services, particularly the Free Legal Aid Centers (FLACs), expand legal aid services (including on HLP-related matters) to rural areas, addressing the reported physical barriers that residents face in accessing administrative services and documentation outside of the city.

ⁱ [UNHCR Operational Data Portal - Ukraine Refugee Situation](#)

ⁱⁱ [IOM Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 16 - April 2024](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 - December 2023](#)

^{iv} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^v [OHCHR, Ukraine: UN Commission concerned by continuing patterns of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law – March 2024](#)

^{vi} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^{vii} [IOM Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 16 - April 2024](#)

^{viii} [IOM Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 16 - April 2024](#)

^{ix} As estimated by the HNRP Analysis Working Group – UKR 2024 Affected Population - September 2023

^x [Protection Analysis Update, June 2023](#)

^{xi} United Nations General Assembly Resolution: ‘Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations’

^{xii} [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA3\) – February 2024](#)

^{xiii} [Protection Cluster: Protection Monitoring Tool Findings 2023, January 2024](#)

^{xiv} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^{xv} [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA3\) – February 2024](#)

^{xvi} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^{xvii} [ACLEU Ukraine Conflict Monitor – April 2024](#)

^{xviii} [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA3\) – February 2024](#)

^{xix} [Health Cluster & WHO, Ukraine: Partners Emergency Response to Attacks - Update #9 as of 30 April 2024](#)

^{xx} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^{xxi} [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA3\) – February 2024](#)

^{xxii} [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict — June 2024](#)

^{xxiii} IOM Flash Update on the Flow Monitoring and Evacuations in Kharkivska Oblast, 31 May 2024

^{xxiv} Danish Refugee Council, Rapid Protection Assessment Kharkiv City, May-June 2024; [OHCHR, Press Briefing Notes of 24 May](#)

^{xxv} [OHCHR, Human Rights Situation During the Russian Occupation of Territory of Ukraine and its Aftermath – December 2023;](#)

^{xxvi} [OHCHR, Detention of Civilians in the Context of the Armed Attack by the Russian Federation Against Ukraine, 27 June 2023](#)

^{xxvii} [CCCM Cluster, IDP Collective Sites Monitoring – January 2024](#)

^{xxviii} UNHCR safety audit 2023, GBV AoR lead sample GBV Safety Audits in Kharkiv in 2024

^{xxix} [World Bank, Ukraine Human Development Update In Focus: Disability and Inclusion – February 2024](#)

^{xxx} [OHCHR: Flash Update #8: Ukraine. Humanitarian Impact of Intensified Hostilities in Kharkivska Oblast](#)

^{xxxi} [CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis Brief Ukraine – October 2023](#)

^{xxxii} [UNHCR, Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees, Refugee Returnees and IDPs – February 2024](#)

^{xxxiii} [UNHCR, Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees, Refugee Returnees and IDPs – February 2024](#)

^{xxxiv} [Protection Cluster: Protection Monitoring Tool Findings 2023, January 2024](#)

^{xxxv} [IOM, Conditions of Return Assessment – December 2023](#)

^{xxxvi} [Protection Cluster: Protection Monitoring Tool Findings 2023, January 2024, and DRC Rapid Protection Assessment in Vysokopilskaya Hromada, Khersonska Oblast](#)

^{xxxvii} [Danish Refugee Council, Quarterly Protection Monitoring Report Ukraine – May 2024](#)

- xxxvii [The Six Grave Violations – Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#)
- xxxviii [Protection Cluster: Protection Monitoring Tool Findings 2023, January 2024](#)
- xxxix [Guidance on humanitarian evacuations of civilians in Ukraine with special considerations for children, June 2024](#); IRC Protection Monitoring Report – June 2024
- xl [Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 - December 2023](#)
- xli [Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023 – December 2022](#)
- xlii [REACH & CP AoR, Child Protection Assessment 2024](#)
- xliiii [World Vision, Child Protection Multisectoral Needs Assessment, 2023, and HIAS, October 2023](#)
- xliv [2023 HIAS / Girls report](#)
- xlv [Magnolia Center for Missing Children - 2023](#)
- xlvi [REACH, Multi-Sector Needs Assessment 2023: Child Protection Findings – March 2023](#)
- xlvii [Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict – June 2024](#)
- xlviii [OHCHR, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict – April 2024](#)
- xlix [Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict – June 2024](#)
- l [CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis Brief Ukraine – October 2023](#)
- li [Study on Gender Practices and Cases of Gender Based Violence in Roma Community, Voices of Romni - 2024](#)
- lii [UN Secretary General Annual Report on Conflict Related Sexual Violence, Security Council - April 2024](#)
- liii [Danish Refugee Council, Rapid GBV Assessment: Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts – February 2024](#)
- liv [Danish Refugee Council, Rapid GBV Assessment: Chernihiv and Sumy Oblast - February 2024](#)
- lv [Danish Refugee Council, Rapid GBV Assessment: Chernihiv and Sumy Oblast - February 2024](#)
- lvi [Service Barriers Faced by Male Survivors of Sexual Violence in Ukraine, WRC and GBV AoR in Ukraine – December 2023](#)
- lvii [The list of 10 vulnerable categories was extended to 15 categories in the next round of amendments of 22 March 2024, following the advocacy efforts by the Protection Cluster and Ukrainian NGOs.](#)
- lviii [Update on changes in payment of IDP allowance \(CMU Resolution #332\) – May 2024](#)
- lix [Ukraine Protection Cluster Legal Aid Bulletin – April 2024](#)
- lx [Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA3\) – February 2024](#)
- lxi [IOM Ukraine – Internal Displacement Report – General Population Survey Round 14 – October 2023](#)
- lxii [Danish Refugee Council, Quarterly Protection Monitoring Report Ukraine – May 2024](#)
- lxiii [Ukrinform – Ukraine National News Agency](#)
- lxiv [Report on Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 March 2024-31 May 2024](#)
- lxv [Ukraine Government Website News - 13 May 2024](#)
- lxvi [OCHA Ukraine: Humanitarian Access Severity Overview as of 31 May 2024](#); Humanitarian Access Snapshot March-April 2024.
- lxvii For example, the latest summary observations by CARE from the Inter-Agency Convoy to Toretska Hromada in Donetsk Oblast, where hostilities significantly intensified in June 2024, indicates that among 11,805 current residents of the hromada, there are approximately 8,500 older people, 937 persons with disabilities, 370 persons with low mobility and 16 children. Similar demographic profiles of population remaining were documented in other Inter-Agency Mission Reports conducted in 2024.

Methodology

Throughout April and May 2024, the Protection Cluster, together with the GBV, CP and MA AoRs, and the Housing, Land and Property Working Group, organised a series of consultations with partners across Ukraine to complete the protection risk prioritization exercise. The data collection was based on the Global Protection Cluster’s Protection Analytical Framework and counted with the participation of a wide range of partners. The Protection Cluster Team, including sub-national coordinators, held a workshop at the beginning of May 2024 to review the findings at oblast level, as well as organized a meeting with the Protection Cluster’s Strategic Advisory Group to agree on prioritized risks at national level. This analysis has been based on both quantitative and qualitative data from existing secondary data sources, including protection assessments and data from key country-wide protection monitoring and information management tools.

Limitations

Areas under the occupation by the Russian Federation are almost entirely inaccessible by the humanitarian community. Relevant information and data have been shared where possible, as no large-scale assessments are available.

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