



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Rule of Law and Community Justice for Conflict-Affected Areas in Ukraine

Final Project Report 2016 - 2018

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine
CRG	Community Reference Group
CSO	Civil society organization
CSN	Community Security Network
CSWG	Community security working group
EECP	Entry/Exit Checkpoint
GCA	Government-controlled areas
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LDF	Local Development Forum
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RPA	Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment
RPP	Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SGF	Small Grants Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Executive Summary

The ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine has had a direct and highly negative impact on social cohesion, resilience, livelihoods, community security, rule of law and access to justice. Displacement, fear, and diminishing levels of trust are acute social problems, and conflict-related distress remains widespread. While social fragmentation, prejudices, regional divides, and low levels of trust in local authorities and institutions existed prior to the crisis, these have been exacerbated as a result of the conflict, in particular in the eastern oblasts of Ukraine.

According to the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment, the conflict had also resulted in increasing tensions between internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities. Moreover, under conflict conditions, law enforcement agencies, security providers and justice institutions were ill-equipped to ensure respect for human rights, adherence for rule of law and even more importantly access to justice to address conflict grievances, especially for the most vulnerable groups, including IDPs, persons with disabilities and elderly. This has brought further exacerbation of inequalities, erosion of trust in public institutions, especially notable in the law enforcement and justice systems, a high level of personal insecurity and citizens' exposure to violence in eastern Ukraine.¹

Given these circumstances in place, the project pursued an overarching objective of **strengthening the protection of human security and rule of law to address the consequences and underlying causes of the conflict**. Its interventions were designed in line with the needs of local counterparts, ranging from local authorities, justice and law enforcement institutions, civil society organizations but most importantly

local population, who continue to suffer the most from the conflict. To this end, the project conducted two assessments of citizens' knowledge of, attitudes toward and experience with justice and security issues in the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine "Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from communities in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts" in 2017² and 2018³ respectively. The findings were important in identifying, implementing and evaluating priority areas where reform and recovery interventions were required and to tailor future actions to strengthen the justice sector and fulfill the justice needs of residents of the three surveyed oblasts (Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr).

Key emphasis was placed on enhancing the engagement of conflict-affected communities, targeting the IDPs, with local authorities, increase the responsiveness of authorities to community security issues, and help restore the social fabric. In this regard, concerted actions have led to the creation and further operational support to the work of the 24 Local Development Forums (LDFs)⁴. The LDFs have proven themselves to be an important mechanism bringing together all the stakeholders to discuss and find lasting solutions to communities'

¹ Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment, available at: http://www.un.org.ua/images/documents/3737/V1-RPA_Eng_Vol1.pdf

² Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from Communities in Three Oblasts 2017, available at:

http://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/security_justice_perspectiv.html

³ Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from Communities in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr Oblasts, available at:

<http://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/recovery-and-peacebuilding/security-and-justice-in-Ukraine-2018.html>

⁴ Local Development Forums and Community Security Working Groups were supported jointly by the the "Rule of Law and Community Justice for Conflict-Affected Areas in Ukraine" project and the "Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine" programme, funded by the EU.

comprehensive development challenges by elaborating relevant roadmaps, strategies, including community security plans.

Moreover, Community Security Working Groups (CSWGs) were set up as part of the LDFs to provide space for community led dialogue among local administration, police, emergency service providers, school representatives, journalists and other activists and are playing a lead role in identifying and resolving issues related to fostering community security. It should be noted that the CSWGs correlate with the ongoing decentralisation process in Ukraine, which has seen more funds transferred from the central to the local level. With many local governments lacking the capacity to conceptualise and budget the added responsibilities under this process, this has provided an impetus for the creation of the CSWGs, which assist local government partners in fulfilling their mandates to provide security to citizens at the local level.

To further enhance security of the conflict-affected communities, the project has also established and provided operational support to the **Community Security Network** (CSN). The reports generated by CSN were important in providing all interested stakeholders, including security providers, policy-makers with up-to-date and independently verifiable data on security threats (see Annex 3 for sample report). The findings have also undergone thorough discussions at periodic coordination meetings in Kramatorsk, Donetsk Oblast, with participation of representatives from the civil-military coordination office, emergency services, the police, civil society and international donor community. The discussions were complemented by elaboration and follow up implementation of proposals to resolve security concerns.

The project also stood at the forefront of mobilizing conflict-affected communities for action through its **special grant support scheme**. The scheme resulted in the implementation of 62 proposals to respond to existing security concerns at the community level. Supported initiatives include installing street lighting, opening of police stations, laying speed bumps, setting up zebra crossings installing video surveillance cameras, improving the provision of free legal and various advocacy projects aimed promoting local communities' par-

ticipation in the decision-making processes (see Annex 4 to see the complete list of grants). Moreover, sustainability and local ownership of the implemented initiatives was ensured by an application of a cost-shared element from the local authorities.

Expanding citizens' access to justice and promoting the rule of law by **increasing the capacity of law enforcement and justice institutions** to effectively respond to existing conflict grievances was one of project's key thematic areas of work. A total of 361 police officers from Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts were trained on theories and practical application of the community policing, an approach that was developed to help the police address crime in an alternative manner rather than simply initiating repressive or responsive-based tactics. Community policing considers the importance of applying prevention mechanisms to improve relationships with the population and to work more closely with the community when dealing with various types of crime.

To further improve conflict-affected population's access to justice, the project provided technical as well as expert support to the local centres for the provision of **free legal aid** in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts, with the aim of improving their capacity to render timely and quality legal services, particularly for the most vulnerable groups (IDPs, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, residents of the non-government-controlled areas, persons with disabilities and ex-combatants). To date, more than 101,000 conflict-affected individuals have received legal aid and support with regards to restoring legal documents, having access to social services and benefits, property rights and on other civil and administrative matters.

Extensive support was also provided to the opening and further functioning of Mobile Legal Aid Cells at the Novotroitske and Mariinka entry/exit checkpoints (EECP) in Donetsk Oblast. The cells have provided legal counselling to more than 7,400 conflict-affected people, including the elderly, persons with disabilities and others in accessing social benefits, obtaining birth or death certificates, pass permits, issues related to inheritance, compensation for damaged or destroyed property and others.

“Your Rights” mobile application is also in place to provide informational support to its users, IDPs, SGBV survivors on the protection and restoration of rights.

In strengthening access to justice, series of efforts were also undertaken in the area of **reducing physical obstacles to justice-service delivery**. In this context, the project conducted thorough accessibility assessment of court buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.⁵ The report provided an in-depth data on the courts’ accessibility, assessing them against relevant national and international legal framework and is also accompanied by recommendations as well as financial calculations needed to improve existing conditions. Based



People at the Novotroitske entry/exit checkpoint, Donetsk Oblast
Photo: Artem Getman / UNDP Ukraine

⁵ Accessibility of the local courts’ buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, available at: <https://bit.ly/2mmXUfK>

on these findings, the district courts in Vuhledar, Donetsk Oblast, and Novoposkov, Luhansk Oblast, were reconstructed in line with universal design principles to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. In addition, police stations in Druzhkivka and Lysychansk in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts respectively have also been renovated and are equipped with ramps and required furniture.

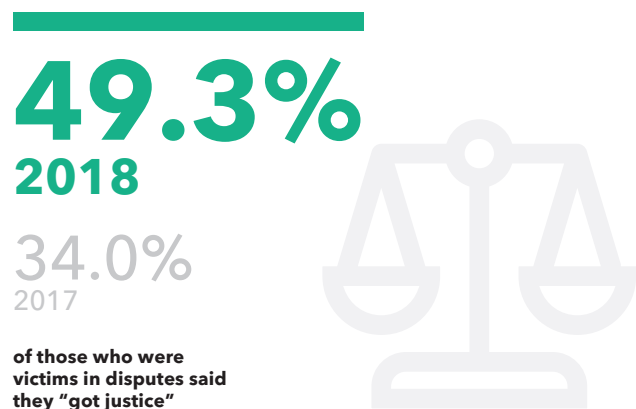
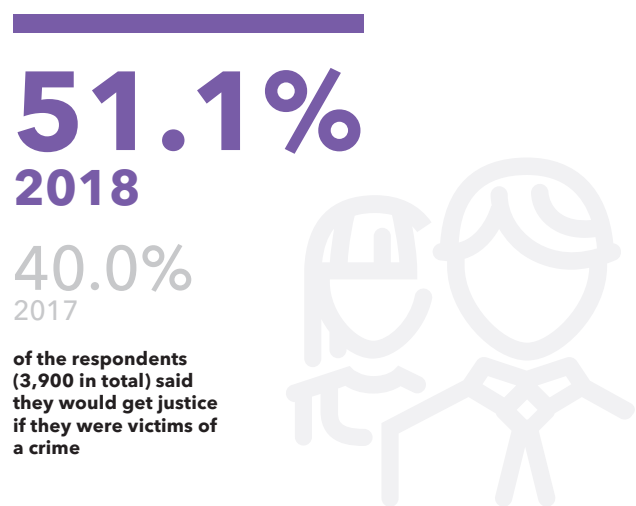
In reaching its objective of strengthening the protection of human security and enhancing the rule of law, the project was guided by an understanding that increasing personal and community security and providing access to justice will lower tensions and prevent conflict, particularly if this is done in participative ways that address exclusion, inequality and discrimination. In turn, this will reinforce the protection of human rights and generate further trust in the state in a virtuous circle. If communities can learn how to work together for mutual benefit and learn how to resolve their problems and grievances based on fairness and justice, society’s power will be channeled more effectively and cohesively for development at national, regional and local levels.

These undertakings have resulted in positive developments with regards to targeted communities’ perception of the justice sector effectiveness. According to 2018 “Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from communities in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts” survey results, 51.1% of the respondents (3,900 in total) said they would get justice if they were victims of a crime, 11.1% points increase from 2017 survey results. Moreover, Court users (76.2%) exhibit a higher degree of confidence in being able to obtain justice after reporting a crime than respondents that do not have cases pending before the courts (48.9%).

Despite overall positive scores, when it comes to the approachability of the police, prosecution and the courts, these three institutions are seen by the respondents as lacking in integrity and efficacy. For instance, over three quarters said that police (77.9%), prosecutors (78.5%) and courts (78.4%) would or likely side with the most powerful person in a dispute. Negative opinions are most pronounced

among those with the lowest levels of formal education, those that are financially among the worst off in society and women. Lawyers (although generally trusted) and courts are seen as unaffordable for the majority of respondents. Another notable finding included the fact that almost half (49.3%) of those who were victims in disputes said they “got justice”, a marked improvement from 2017, when only 34% felt that way. Notably, the survey has also revealed significant increase in the percentage of population in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts who are aware of the availability of free legal aid services, namely from 20% in 2016 to 36.7% in 2018.

Hence, these reports were important in identifying, implementing and evaluating priority areas where reform and recovery interventions were required and to tailor future interventions to strengthen the justice sector and fulfill the justice needs of residents of the three surveyed oblasts (Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr).



Background

Since independence Ukraine has been characterized by weak rule of law, endemic corruption and regular, albeit generally limited violation of human rights, which has generated a deep disconnect between citizens and the state institutions.

The events and developments in Ukraine since 2013 led to levels of crisis and opportunities that were unprecedented in its history as an independent state. Large-scale demonstrations in Kyiv and other cities of Ukraine, the change in government, the occupation of Crimea and the outbreak of the armed conflict in the east of the country have generated immense challenges with regards to safeguarding human rights, community security, the rule of law and access to justice. This, in turn, has exacerbated general discontent with and distrust of government as well as created great personal and community insecurity in conflict-affected areas.

While trends such as regional divisions and low levels of trust in authorities and institutions existed prior to the crisis, many of these have sharpened as a result of it. In conflict-affected communities, law enforcement agencies, security services and justice institutions lack capacity and means to ensure protection and restoration of rights, rule of law, to mitigate disputes and tensions, and to address violence and crime. Ongoing hostilities, related community-level violence, and misinformation contribute to prejudice, polarization, and deepening divisions. These developments call for a need to establish and operationalize community-based reference groups or networks to open a door to new, more positive interaction between the law enforcement bodies and the members of the conflict-affected communities.

The situation was exacerbated by military action, which increased the feeling of insecurity in the population, especially among persons living near the 'contact line'. Around 1.7 million people have moved out of the conflict-affected area, with over 800,000 now residing permanently in the Government Controlled Areas (GCA) of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. An estimated two-thirds of the IDPs are women and children, who were forced to leave their homes in search of safety and better livelihood opportunities.⁶ This situation in place has also created new demands in the justice system, first and far most related to the issues of obtaining or replacing legal documentation, accessing pensions and social benefits, property and business registration, receiving birth, marriage or death certificates and other matters of administrative and civil justice.

The conflict has also disproportionately affected women due to persistent gender inequality, stereotypes and discrimination that emphasize men as protectors and heroes, and women as caring supporters. Moreover, the reporting and investigation of rape and domestic violence leave much to be desired with high levels of social stigma preventing victims from approaching law enforcement and justice institutions, calling for an urgent necessity to support SGBV survivors by ensuring a better victim-centred policy response including legal aid, development of shelters/emergency accommodation, increased capacity of justice and law enforcement officers to more efficiently address and handle SGBV cases.

⁶ UN OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview, available at: <https://bit.ly/2JgF9>



Conference on community security and justice, 25-27 May 2017, Zhytomyr
Photo: Oleksandr Ratushnyak/ UNDP Ukraine

To address the aforementioned critical challenges the UNDP has implemented the “Rule of Law and Community Justice for Conflict-Affected Areas in Ukraine” project that was financially supported by the Government of the Netherlands. The project’s key objective lied in strengthening the protection of human security and rule of law in conflict-affected oblasts of Ukraine, addressing the consequences and underlying causes of the conflict.

TO THIS END, THE PROJECT’S INTERVENTIONS WERE BUILT AROUND THE FOLLOWING CONCRETE OUTPUTS:

OUTPUT 1:

Strengthened personal and community security in conflict-affected areas

OUTPUT 2:

Increased capacity of justice institutions for efficient, effective, and transparent service delivery

The project was integrated into a comprehensive Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (RPP), a unifying programmatic framework for eight development projects funded by nine international partners. The RPP was designed to combine efforts across several areas, and successful implementation of the programme itself is contributing greatly to mitigating mounting risks and managing increasing challenges in the areas most affected by the conflict. Setting a long-term, integrated agenda for strengthening governance capacity at regional, district and local levels makes current recovery interventions more robust, sustainable, inclusive and responsive; contributes to restoring trust in government and rebuilding legitimacy; and further enhances social cohesion and senses of security in affected communities, thus reducing potential for conflict.

Output 1: **Strengthened personal and community security in conflict-affected areas**

The main objective of the output lied in increasing personal and community security to make the enjoyment of human rights tangible and relevant at the individual level. Prior to undertaking concrete set of initiatives, the project has conducted focus group discussions with the targeted communities to get a detailed assessment and mapping of communities' needs to align subsequent interventions accordingly. This was followed by the conduct of two waves of survey "Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from Communities in Three Oblasts" in 2017 and 2018 respectively to allow the tracking of changes and measure the impacts. Noteworthy, the surveys have revealed that unemployment and poverty are the major factors leading to population's sense of insecurity. The issues that are more directly related to the conflict, such as mines, shelling, conflict-related trauma and distress or tensions between IDPs

and host communities scored lower on the list. These findings were uniform, irrespective of whether the respondents were from areas directly hit by conflict (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts) or from the 'control' area (Zhytomyr Oblast), which feels the repercussions of the conflict in a more indirect manner. The results have also demonstrated that day to day security concerns that might seem trivial to outside actors have in fact appeared to be the most pressing ones for local communities, whereas more high profile threats are less worrisome to the respondents.

In line with these findings and the needs assessment of the communities, the project applied community security approach, aimed at enhancing capacities and empowering communities, local authorities, law enforcement and justice institutions to work together to find common local solutions to the faced securi-



1st Forum of Judges of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, 20-22 June 2018, Sviatohirsk
Photo: UNDP Ukraine

ty challenges. It gives communities the opportunity to be their own agents of change, empowering them to make accountable institutions designed to provide security services.⁷ The application of such an approach has led to the creation and further operational support to the work of 24 LDFs in all target locations to serve as interactive platforms for the communities, local authorities and security providers to discuss and prepare action plans related to issues of local development and strengthening community security. Series of efforts were undertaken to operationalize the work of LDFs, which have resulted in the elaboration and adoption of special regulations, governing their mandate and expected tasks.

CSWGs were set up as part of the LDFs to provide space for community led dialogue among local administration, police, emergency services, school representatives, journalists and other activists, information sharing and raising security issues and concerns among local authorities, security providers and communities at the grass-roots level. To date, 898 women and 585 men are active members of the CSWGs. Notably, the recommendations developed by the groups are subject for mandatory consideration by local executive authorities in accordance with Article 9, Paragraph 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On local self-governance". This in turn has led to the fact that 74% members of CSWGs feel that their voices are considered by the authorities in improving security of the targeted communities. The project's community security workstream has also entailed support to the establishment and follow up operational support to the work CSNs, to monitor and present to the local authorities and security providers with up-to-date information on the security situation and challenges in areas close to the contact line. The monthly reports produced by the members of the CSNs are regularly presented and handed over to the attention of the local authorities to take appropriate measures to improve security environment in the relevant communities of conflict-affected oblasts.

Moreover, in enhancing personal and community security in conflict-affected areas, the project also stayed at the forefront of mobilizing and empowering communities around common goals related to local development planning, enhancing the rule of law and

access to justice, social cohesion, community security, combatting SGBV and promotion of gender equality. To this end, the project has set up a grants scheme to support community driven initiatives that has resulted in the implementation of 62 projects that have increased levels of safety in the targeted locations, enhanced institutional capacities of local security providers and significantly contributed to improving dialogue between local residents and authorities.

Extensive works were also carried out towards strengthening the capacities of law enforcement officials, including patrol as well as district police officers to prevent and respond to SGBV cases. In cooperation with UN Women, a total of 271 police officers have increased their understanding and awareness of women's safety and security concerns, especially violence survivors, and have also reflected on the development of joint measures to address those needs through developing and implementing relevant regional and local policies.

The undertaken interventions have ensured the availability of and responsiveness to local population needs of services provided by the police, local authorities and justice institutions. This has played an important role in improving the perception of personal and community security in conflict-affected areas, thus contributing to long-term, sustainable results in peacebuilding, reconciliation and recovery. Comprehensive support was provided for the empowerment of the local population to more actively engage in shaping local and regional government responses to community needs in delivering justice and improving security, thereby strengthening the system and mechanisms for cooperation and coordination not only between community members and service providers, but also within diverse community groups. This has led to a more effective and adoptable solutions, practices and policy development.

⁷ Community mobilization: UNDP approach towards community security and social cohesion, available at: <https://bit.ly/2Pnpu8a>

Activity 1.1.1 Assessing communities' sense of security

Identification of communities' security needs involved gathering both qualitative and quantitative information to form a clear understanding of knowledge, attitudes, and the needs of the residents in the targeted areas. In view of this, focus group discussions were conducted in each location to familiarize the communities with the Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme, its approach and strategic vision and to most importantly collect responses to a questionnaire about their security concerns. These have been followed by elaboration of detailed analytical assessment reports that have formed a solid basis in designing and tailoring interventions to properly address the needs raised.

Moreover, assessment of communities' security needs has also involved conduct of the survey, "Security and Justice in Ukraine: Perspectives from Communities in Three Oblasts" in 2017 and in 2018 to allow tracking of changes and to measure progress achieved. The surveys were built on data and expert opinions of local authorities, representatives of the judiciary and law enforcement bodies and has also involved interviews with some 3,900 respondents from Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts.

The survey conducted in 2017 has established baselines and revealed the following major areas of concern:

- Personal and community insecurity, shown by the fact that street lightning, stray dogs and environmental pollution all rated as higher concerns than shelling;
- Lack of communities' systemic engagement with the law enforcement bodies to jointly tackle security related issues is evidenced by the fact that more than half of the respondents (56.8%) believe that the police never holds such meetings and 23.9% have rated such meetings to be rare and this is despite the relevant legal requirements;
- When asked whether they thought they would get justice as a victim of a crime, 7% of respondents thought that they would get justice, 32% that it was likely, 40% that it was unlikely, and 20% that they would not get justice. Moreover, access to justice at the local level, in particular in communities along the contact line, is limited by a lack of information on where and how to obtain free legal aid and by insufficiently developed alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation, conciliation and arbitration, which would address the particular issues of citizens directly affected by the conflict in a more effective manner;
- The low level (20%) of public awareness on the availability of free legal aid;
- Around half of people believe intimate partner violence never occurs in their communities. This low level of recognition emphasizes that there is a long way to go in raising awareness of the existence and prevalence of this type of crime, which is especially challenging due to it being hidden within the home.

These major findings were important to receive objective data of the situation with regards to community security, the rule of law and access to justice in target communities in order to design actions reflecting the needs of local counterparts, including local authorities, law enforcement and judiciary institutions, but most importantly, the ordinary citizens who continue to suffer the most from the conflict consequences. The assessments have also allowed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of reforms in the justice sector and service delivery and advocate for policy and legislative changes both at the national and oblast levels.

Activity 1.1.2 Raising public awareness of security-related issues

Law enforcement bodies, regional and local administrations and the public have been sensitized on GBV and gender equality through the Violence has no Excuse communication campaign held in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, jointly with UN Women. The campaign was implemented in partnership with the Ministry of the Interior of Ukraine and the National Police and supported awareness-raising on GBV at the regional and community levels. Using community-based events and social videos, the communications campaign was key to engaging men (particularly police officers) in promoting zero tolerance to violence. The campaign has sensitized local communities about GBV prevention and response; and promoted trust in the police in the target oblasts. The campaign was launched with media briefings and the Race against Violence city races, with the participation of police, Oblast Administrations, civil society, service providers, international organizations and local communities. The races were conducted on 13 May 2017 in Kramatorsk, on 30 June 2017 in Sievierodonetsk and on 12 April 2018 in Mariupol. The city races contributed to raising awareness on GBV and increased trust between community members and the police.

The campaign has also included production and dissemination of articles to raise the public's and local authorities' awareness on gender-based and domestic violence. Four articles were published in 10 local newspapers⁸. Moreover, three audio advertisements were developed and disseminated through two national and nine local radio stations⁹ to sensitize the targeted communities on GBV prevention and response and to encourage survivors to report offences to the police. Importantly, the advertisements also promoted the National Toll-free Hotline on the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

To reach a wider audience, the campaign has also resulted in the production and publication of two posters on billboards in 14 cities of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.¹⁰ The posters were aimed at portraying violence as a severe form of crime and encouraged its survivors to seek help from the local police and report such instances to the National Toll-free Hotline. In addition to posters, three social videos were produced targeting survivors of domestic violence. The videos were broadcasted on national and regional television channels¹¹ as well as on social media.

⁸ The articles were published in the following newspapers: *Mayak*, *Vpered*, *Zorya*, *Maryinska Nyva* and *Provintsiya* in Donetsk Oblast and *Telegazeta*, *Svativski Vidomosti*, *Sels'kaya nov*, *Kremynshchyna* and *Popasnianskyi vesnik* in Luhansk Oblast.

⁹ National radiostations: 'Kraina FM', 'Lux FM'. Regional radio stations: 'Puls FM', 'Radio Relax', '49th parallel', 'Radio STV', 'KTV Plus', 'Svativska Rayon TRC' in Luhansk Oblast and 'Radio Pryazovya', 'Merydian', 'Mozhlyvist'.

¹⁰ Number of posters in each hromada of Donetsk oblast: Kramatorsk – 5, Druzhkivka – 2, Slovyansk – 2, Bakhmut – 2, Vuhledar – 2, Mariupol – 5, Sartana – 1, Mykolaivka – 1, Lyman – 1, Velyka Novosilka – 1. Luhansk oblast: Sievierodonetsk – 3; Lysychansk – 2; Rubizhne – 2; Kreminna – 1.

¹¹ National: "UA Pershyi." Regional: "27th channel" and "DoTV" in Donetsk Oblast and "LOT" in Luhansk Oblast.

Activity 1.1.3 Increase citizens' awareness of rights

The 2017 findings of the Security and Justice Survey have revealed that respondents particularly from poor, less-educated and rural households were generally unaware of the availability of free legal aid. Therefore, in increasing conflict-affected population's awareness of their rights, key emphasis was placed on expanding the knowledge on the availability of free legal aid. To this end, more than 175,855 printed materials (booklets, stickers, posters) were provided to Local Free Legal Aid Centres in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts explaining the nature and types of the available services as well as contact details in targeted locations.

To further raise public's awareness of security-related community issues, the project organized a series of national and regional conferences to present the results of the Security and Justice Survey. The conferences were held in Kyiv, Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts and were followed by discussions to encourage evidence-based policy-making and to strengthen advocacy for legal and procedural reforms that will have a meaningful impact on people's lives. Participants of the regional conferences included representatives from the amalgamated territorial communities, Donetsk and Luhansk Oblast Administrations, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Police of Ukraine, courts, Free Legal Aid Centres, the Ombudsperson's Office, and non-governmental and civil society organizations. The meetings were also accompanied by joint development of recommendations on improving community security and justice at the community level based on the reports' findings.

Public presentations of the results were also held in the cities of Druzhkivka, Kramatorsk, Sloviansk of Donetsk Oblast as well in Kreminna, Lysychansk, Rubizhne, Sievierodonetsk of Luhansk Oblast and were also followed by lively discussions and recommendations to further improve security and access to justice in the conflict-affected areas.

Activity 1.1.4 Establish a Small Grants Fund (SGF) for communities and CSOs to implement micro- projects for improving community security and access to justice

The project has also established a special grants scheme to support community-based initiatives to improve community security and enhance access to justice. The scheme played a key role in empowering community members to themselves identify and prioritize existing challenges and provided mechanisms for those needs to be both communicated and responded to. As a result of a competitive selection process, a total of 62 projects were implemented that have increased levels of safety in the targeted locations, enhanced institutional capacities of local security providers and significantly contributed to improving dialogue between local residents and authorities.

Among other benefits, the small grants were ranging from street lighting, laying speed bumps, support to the opening of police stations (in 4 communities of Zhytomyr Oblast, in Novoposkov of Luhansk Oblast and in Novhorodske of Donetsk Oblast) to setting zebra crossings, fences, installation of video surveillance cameras helped to improve people's access to services and information and to increase the level of trust between authorities and local grass-roots groups. The sustainability of the grants was ensured by providing support to existing community level NGOs and by encouraging a cost-shared approach from the local authorities that has also significantly contributed to improving dialogue between the civil society sector and the authorities.

Activity 1.2.1 Train and sensitize members of law enforcement, and security services to address conflict-related violations of fundamental rights, including SGBV

SGBV is one of the most serious areas of concern facing members of conflict-affected communities. According to the Security and Justice Survey, when asked about prevalence of domestic violence around one in five respondents recognized that some form of intimate partner violence (whether resulting in injury or not) occurred occasionally or regularly in their community. Less than one third said it occurred rarely in their community, with just under half saying it never occurred. The low level of recognition of intimate partner violence emphasizes that there is a long way to go in raising awareness of the existence and prevalence of this type of crime, which is especially challenging due to it being hidden within the households and not reaching the relevant state institutions, namely the police.

In this regard, increasing the capacities of police officers to adequately respond, handle and prevent SGBV cases lied at the forefront of project's activities. In cooperation with UN Women, a total of 271 police officers from Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts were trained on the theories and practical methods of addressing and responding to SGBV and domestic violence cases. The trainings have also included special sessions on national and international legislation related to gender-based violence, practical strategies for community-police partnerships in responding to GBV cases with a focus on domestic violence and interaction with perpetrators and violence survivors.

The trainings were also followed by evaluation and feedback from the participants. Notably, more than 90% of the trainees have agreed on the practical application of the acquired knowledge in policing activities.

Activity 1.2.2 Ensure local authorities at community and regional levels respond to community security concerns

At the initial stage of implementation, the project has placed an emphasis on identifying security concerns of the targeted communities. Through focus group discussions and interviews involving civic activists, representatives of local authorities as well as local business circles, analytical reports were prepared for 24 communities in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts, featuring their in-depth perception of issues related to local development and security agenda.

In responding to the identified challenges, significant importance was given to fostering the concept of "community policing", an approach that was developed to help the security providers to address crimes in an alternative manner rather than initiating repressive or responsive tactics. This type of approach considers the role of prevention mechanisms to improve relationships with the population and to work more closely with the community in dealing with various types of crimes. Community policing also integrates many principles associated with crime prevention, such as knowledge-building and promotion of human rights.

CSWGs were established to provide space for discussions, information sharing and for raising security concerns among local authorities, security

providers and communities at the grass-roots level. They have played and are continuing to play a lead role in identifying community security-related issues and in finding concrete ways and mechanisms to address them. The range of issues addressed by CSWGs includes the following actions, among others:

- Design and implementation of local security programmes (including smart schools, safe cities, and safe bus stops);
- Conduct of public awareness campaigns on community security, social cohesion and access to justice;
- Creation of fire brigades involving the local volunteers in the remote areas;
- Installing clean water supply filters in schools of Druzhkivka and water wells in some localities close to the contact line;
- Conducting safety audits in line with the designed methodology (e.g. fire protection audit, safety audit for schools and kindergartens, traffic safety audit for road signs and marking);
- Improving partnerships and communication among existing shelters for SGBV survivors in the conflict-affected areas;
- Installation of fences in the educational facilities of the conflict-affected communities;
- Launch mobile provision of free legal aid in areas close to the contact line and entry/exit checkpoints (EECP);
- Installation of street lightening in public places to enhance safety of community residents.

Series of capacity building interventions on the theories and practical application of the principles of community policing were also delivered to the members of CSWGs. The four-day seminars featured two days on community policing, covered a variety of topics, including: the role of police in society, the rule of law and community policing, how to understand the community and its constituent parts, the benefits of partnership, community safety and crime prevention, problem-oriented policing, community policing under Ukrainian law, and others. A total of 361 participants attended the training seminars, from the ranks of district police officers, juvenile prevention police officers, and patrol police officers as well as members of CSWGs (see Annex 5 for curriculum details).

As mentioned earlier, CSWGs are currently comprised of 898 women and 585 men with knowledge and resources to effectively interact with the local police structures and provide meaningful recommendations and insights aimed at creating secure communities. The groups continue to play a lead role in increasing public's trust towards the work of the police structures and are gaining much needed support from the public as an essential dialogue platform for solving community-based problems. The efficiency of the work of CSWGs is also evidenced by the fact that more than 70% of its members believe that their voices are taken into account in improving safety of their communities.

Additional workshop was organized for 22 heads of police departments of Donetsk Oblast on the “Features of communication with the local population and the work of the police in the conditions of reintegration of the regions after the armed conflict” in Mariupol, on August 11-12, 2018. The workshop has enhanced the knowledge of its participants to identify fake news in traditional media sources as well as in social media. Special sessions were dedicated to the discussion of propaganda and on the peculiarities of interacting with population affected by it.

Furthermore, to facilitate exchange of best practices in practical application of the community policing, study tours were organized to Uzhhorod and Mukachevo cities of Zakarpattia Oblast for 30 police officers from Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts. The visit has served as a first-hand opportunity for its participants to acquire skills and knowledge in building sustainable interaction platforms and dialogue with the community members in jointly combatting crimes and implementing various preventive activities.

Practical guideline on the implementation of community policing in rural areas has been developed and is available for use (see Annex 6). The guideline is intended to increase the knowledge of the security providers, residents as well as civic activists on the principles of community policing, its legislative framework, basic elements, techniques for joint identification of security challenges and solution mechanisms. It also provides detailed insight into the best practices of community policing projects throughout Ukraine and other countries that could potentially be replicated in other targeted locations.

The project has also actively worked in the area of improving reporting system of the police departments to the local population. To this end, special public reporting form was developed in cooperation with the Kharkiv Institute of Social Research and approved by the police management of the targeted oblasts setting new reporting frameworks, rules and standards of interaction with the residents. The type of information that is now provided to the public is user-friendly, accompanied by easy to understand statistical data on types of crimes committed and actions taken by the police. It also includes special sections on the upcoming plans of the police in tackling existing community security challenges. Notably, the reporting format was also endorsed by the management of the National Police of Ukraine and is expected to be used nationwide following the approval of a special Decree¹².

In 2018, the project has also organized series of trainings for 24 juvenile police officers with a focus on the basics of mediation skills and alternative methods of dispute resolution. The knowledge and practical skills received during the trainings will help the police officers to form children’s conflict resolution skills through mediation techniques, provide primary intervention services and assessments of the needs of families in which children exhibit deviant behavior, redirecting such cases to special “Support Centres” to receive qualified socio-psychological, legal and other required assistance.

¹² More info on the new reporting format of the police to the community is available at: <https://www.npu.gov.ua/news/golovne/vidteper-policziya-v-regionax-zvituvatime-pered-gromadyanami-pro-svoyu-robotu-u-novomu-formati-sergij-knyazjev/>

Activity 1.3.1 Assist in developing local level, civil society and community engagement in national reforms and build related capacity

The project has supported the understanding of relevant reforms and legal changes in the targeted communities. Prior to establishing CSWGs, focus group discussions were conducted to assess security concerns and needs of the residents. The discussions were also used to familiarize the participants with changes and novelties of the Law “On the National Police of Ukraine”, adopted in 2015. These provisions describe the particularities of cooperation between police and communities as well as their respective rights and duties. Follow up consultations with the representatives of the communities have also included presentation and discussions of the new by-laws on community’s engagement with the police, namely:

- The order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated 28 July 2017 №. 650 “On the adoption of the organizational regulation of district police officers’ work”;
- “The Strategy of Development of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine till 2020”, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in November 2017.

Activity 1.3.2 Pilot early warning mechanisms for threats to community security

Technical and expert support was provided by the project in launching Community Security Networks (CSNs) in Donetsk Oblast to timely identify and take relevant actions to address safety and security needs of the conflict-affected residents living on or next to contact line. In one such example, the project team provided support to local residents to raise, with the armed forces, the issue of why they are refusing access to the cemetery for citizens to tend to their loved ones.

The CSNs are comprised of Community Reference Groups (CRGs), whose members were selected as a result of a series of meetings with representatives of local authorities, civic activists, local businesses and in line with a predefined selection criteria. The network has been agreed with the Civil-Military Cooperation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (CIMIC). Concerns of the population have been presented and discussed jointly with CIMIC, local police, OHCHR, UNICEF and other stakeholders.

With support from UNDP, the members of CSNs increased their capacity and skills to timely identify local human security needs and submit regular mobile-phone based surveys on them. Their results are shown on an online Community Security Platform with an access permit only for local security providers to take appropriate measures. Contrary to the expectations, residents of the targeted communities only rarely mentioned hard security issues, such as shelling and physical confrontations, among their priority concerns and have instead pointed to the importance of tackling socio-economic challenges, such as unemployment and inadequate provision of social services. This data has played an important in adjusting the work of the Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme to meet the needs of local residents via an increase of the small grants programme in the targeted locations and improvement of the delivery of social, administrative and legal services.

Output 2: **Increased community justice through capable institutions for rights-based service delivery and effective access to justice**



The main goal of the output was built around expanding public's, especially vulnerable group's access to justice to address conflict related grievances. At the initial stage of its implementation, the project has carried out a baseline assessment of the free legal aid provision in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts to align its interventions accordingly. The assessment has revealed that the quality of the services provided by the Legal Aid Centres in all three oblasts were far from meeting the required standards due to the lack of adequate technology and capacity of the legal aid lawyers to deliver quality counselling on land disputes, access to social benefits, combatting SGBV and a wide range of other aspects. Moreover, the first Security and Justice Survey (2017) indicated that justice actors are generally perceived to be quite

accessible, but respondents from poorer households believed justice to be reserved for the rich and powerful. This perception of the justice sector not serving the needs of all persons equally is worrisome and underlines an urgent need for further reforms. The survey has also revealed public's low level of knowledge on the availability of the free legal aid services showcased by the fact that most of the respondents who even knew about secondary legal aid believed that they would be required to pay the government lawyer and did not have much confidence that their interests would be represented as well as by a private lawyer. Importantly, respondents have also expressed concern about whether they would understand court procedures, and in some oblasts felt they would not know how to start a case, underscoring a clear need



Presentation of “Your Rights” Mobile Application, 8 November 2018, Kyiv
Photo: UNDP Ukraine

for improved education and awareness-raising to help citizens understand the judicial process to seek justice resorting to available legal means.

Given these developments in place, the project's major intervention areas were built around enhancing access to justice by institutionalizing and improving the provision of primary and secondary legal aid. Technical and expert support was provided to secondary legal aid centres in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts, leading to the fact that 101,428 persons have received the needed quality services, including IDPs whose range of priority needs included restoring legal documents, having access to social services and employment, establishing and enforcing property rights, supporting ongoing legal proceedings and financial obligations (such as loans and mortgages in their home areas), compensation (such as registering claims for property loss or damage), and other civil and administrative matters.

The project has also supported the opening and further full-scale operation of two Mobile Legal Aid Cells (MLAC) in Novotroitske and Mariinka entry/exit checkpoints (EECP) of Donetsk Oblast to meet the increasing need of people residing in the non-government-controlled parts of Ukraine.¹³ The MLACs have already rendered their services to more than 7,400 persons, crossing the contact line on obtaining pass permits, birth or death certificates, on issues related to social payments, inheritances, compensation for damaged or destroyed property.

In cooperation with "iDev-Innovation Development", the project launched "Your Rights" mobile application, a timely response to help protect the rights of IDPs and SGBV survivors. The first of its kind, the app is yet another important contribution to addressing the information gap concerning the rights of the conflict-affected population. It goes beyond mere provision of information but also includes a step-by-step practical guidance to its users on the protection and restoration of their rights, along with contact details of the nearest Free Legal Aid Centres.¹⁴

Assessment of the capacity needs, physical conditions and accessibility of court buildings and police stations in all the targeted communities was also carried within the project's framework. According to the findings, not a single court or police station in targeted oblasts have met the required standards. As a follow up, the district courts in Vuhledar, Donetsk Oblast, and Novopskov, Luhansk Oblast, have been redesigned to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and parents with children. All venues for visitors have been renovated to create an improved client-oriented environment. Moreover, police stations in Druzhkivka and Lysychansk (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts respectively) have also been renovated in line with universal design principles and are equipped with ramps and required furniture. Without physical access to justice, persons with disabilities will stay without rights and therefore legally unsecured. There can be no effective access to justice if the buildings in which law enforcement agencies and the judiciary are located are not physically accessible, or if the services, information and communication they are provide are not accessible to the public.

Undertaken initiatives have contributed to improving community security and access to justice, and have enhanced capacity, legitimacy and accountability of law enforcement and justice institutions to respond to conflict-related grievances.

¹³ More info is available at: <https://bit.ly/2UkwNEW>

¹⁴ More info is available at: <https://bit.ly/2ARjzq2>

Activity 2.1.1 Strengthen the ability of regional Legal Aid Coordination Committees to coordinate primary legal aid provision, in order to ensure more comprehensive and sustainable legal aid provision



Mobile Legal Aid Centre at the Novotroitske checkpoint of Donetsk Oblast
Photo: UNDP Ukraine

At the initial stage of its implementation, the project has carried out a thorough assessment of the free legal aid provision in the targeted oblasts, relying on open sources as well as series of face-to-face meetings with the management and the staff of the free legal aid bureaus in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts. The assessment has revealed that centres lack technical equipment to ensure operational and remote delivery of services and are in continuous need of capacity building support to meet the growing needs of the conflict-affected population with regards to obtaining social benefits, legal documentation, health care and other issues. In line with the assessment findings, the project provided support to the opening and further functioning of two MLACs in Novotroitske and Mariinka entry/exit checkpoint (EECP) in Donetsk Oblast to arrange the delivery of services to more than 7,400 persons crossing the points daily, many of whom are elderly, persons with disabilities, women with children in need of legal counselling (oral and written advice, the preparation of legal documents, referrals, etc.). Both MLACs now have all the needed technical and material basis to ensure justice delivery to the most in need.

In addition, the Security and Justice Survey have also revealed that the respondents particularly from poor, less-educated and rural households were generally unaware of the availability of free legal aid (only 19% were aware of how to approach the centres). Therefore, in increasing conflict-affected population’s awareness of their rights, key emphasis was placed on expanding the knowledge on the availability of free legal aid. To this end, more than 175,855 printed materials (booklets, stickers, posters) were provided to Local Free Legal Aid Centres in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts explaining the nature and types of the available services as well as contact details in targeted locations, bringing significant increase of the population seeking free legal aid counselling.

Activity 2.1.2 Support enhanced primary and secondary legal aid to vulnerable persons

In enhancing the provision of primary and secondary free legal counselling, the project supported series of community-based initiatives through its Small Grants Fund (SGF). The SGF played a key role in empowering communities to themselves identify and prioritize existing challenges and provided a venue for those needs to be both communicated and responded to. Supported projects have resulted in legal, socio-psychological support to more than 500 SGBV survivors, increased public's knowledge on the availability of the free legal aid centres through public outreach activities and gave free of charge legal counselling to residents of remote areas with no free legal aid centre yet.

Activity 2.1.3 Support continued institutionalisation of primary legal aid

In supporting further institutionalisation of primary legal aid, the project carried out series of training seminars on "Emotional competence and conflict resolution" for 60 staff of the Secondary Legal Aid Centres in Mariupol, Kramatorsk of Donetsk Oblast, Sievierodonetsk, Starobilsk and Milove of Luhansk Oblast and Zhytomyr, Berdychiv and Korosten of Zhytomyr Oblast. The seminars have contributed to enhancing the knowledge and practical skills of the participants on conflict resolution, adoption of relevant and suitable strategies in overcoming conflictual situations and controlling emotions. Special sessions were dedicated to learning the methods of increasing self-confidence and burnouts at work.

Additional capacity building interventions were organized for 29 paralegals of Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts to further expand the provision of free legal counselling to the conflict-affected community members in need. The trainings were delivered by experienced lawyers of the Free Legal Aid Centres with a focus on the most frequently asked legal questions, that ranges from accessing social benefits and payments to information as well as issues related to family law.

To further enhance conflict-affected population's access to justice, the project launched a special mobile application "Your Rights". The app is a crucial contribution to addressing the information gap concerning the rights of IDPs and SGBV survivors. It goes beyond mere provision of information to also include step-by-step, practical guidance to its users on the protection and restoration of their rights, along with the contact details of nearest Free Legal Aid Centers. It is available for free downloading for iOS and Android systems.

Support was also provided to NGO "Pravoyi Donbas" in the development, publication and dissemination of 72,000 newspaper copies to reach the portion of population with limited or no access to internet, especially the elderly. The newspapers contain information on the protection of legal rights, contact details of relevant state authorities and most importantly practical, step-by-step information on how to receive quality and free of charge legal aid. The copies were also distributed to EECs, partner NGOs and Free Legal Aid Centres.

Activity 2.2.1 Local police, judges and prosecutors, court staff and lawyers trained to respond to conflict- related crime

Raising the capacity of local counterparts, including law enforcement officials as well as the judiciary to effectively tackle and respond to conflict-related crimes with close engagement of the community members remained a key priority addressed throughout the project. Please see activity 1.2.1 for more details.

Activity 2.2.2 Capacity of judicial institutions strengthened to efficiently handle SGBV cases and ensure equal access to legal and judicial protection for SGBV survivors

As mentioned earlier, increasing the capacities of police officers and the judiciary to adequately respond, handle and prevent SGBV cases lied at the forefront of project's activities. To this end, in May-June 2018, the project has delivered trainings for 33 judges of the local courts of general jurisdiction of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts on the "basics of mediation and methods for alternative dispute resolution". Participants were familiarized with the values, principles and practical tools for applying mediation in conflict resolution that is based on dialogue, compromise and inclusiveness of the interests of all the parties involved.

The project has also supported the conduct of the 1st Forum of Judges of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, held on June 20, 2018. The convening was attended by judges of regional, district as well as Supreme Court and was dedicated to the joint discussion of issues and cases related to restoration of assets of citizens incurred as an aftermath of military conflict in eastern Ukraine. Major highlights have included in-depth discussion of the issues related to ensuring physical access to justice that forms one of the fundamental parts in ensuring transparency, openness and accessibility of the judiciary system at large. In the opinion of the participants, Ukrainian courts are far from meeting international standards on ensuring physical access to justice, especially for people with disabilities. Beyond this, physical access to justice encompasses further no less important points such as access to judiciary information in an understandable format, clear working hours of the courts and a number of other aspects that were thoroughly discussed by the participants. First and far most, the meeting provided much needed platform in strengthening interaction between courts of different instances in discussing and adopting best practices to contribute to better transparency and openness of the system at large.

Activity 2.3.1 Increase the transparency of the functioning of local courts

The project has conducted an in-depth and thorough assessment of the website content of the courts in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts. The focus was made on the type of published information, its accessibility to the public, statistical data, conducted and planned hearings, the publication of the judiciary decisions and other aspects. The study is also accompanied by relevant recommendations to individual courts to improve content of the websites and increase public's, civil society's access to the information as per national legislation (see Annex 7).

Activity 2.4.1 Rehabilitation or reconstruction of justice infrastructure in conflict- affected regions

To assess the existing situation with regards to capacity needs, physical conditions and accessibility of court buildings, a study “Accessibility of the local courts’ buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts” was launched in 2017. The report has revealed that no single court in both oblasts met the required standards with regards to their physical accessibility for persons with disabilities, informational support for persons with hearing and visual impairments nor the required parking lots (at least 10% of lots should be allocated to persons with disabilities).

Based on these findings, the district courts in Vuhledar, Donetsk Oblast, and Novopskov, Luhansk Oblast, have been redesigned to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and parents with children. All venues for visitors have been renovated to create an improved client-oriented environment. Moreover, police stations in Druzhkivka and Lysychansk (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts respectively) have also been renovated in line with universal design principles and are equipped with ramps and required furniture.



Reconstructed Vuhledar City Court, Donetsk Oblast
Photo: UNDP Ukraine

Conclusion

The ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine heavily undermined the ability of the state to address the needs of the public, resulted in massive declines in social cohesion, generated distrust towards local authorities and engendered feelings of insecurity and growing pressure to leave places of residence in search of better livelihood opportunities. Women were disproportionately affected by the conflict because of persistent gender inequality and discrimination.

Social fragmentation, prejudices, regional divides, and low levels of trust in local authorities and institutions existed prior to the crisis, these have been exacerbated due to it. In conflict-affected communities, law enforcement agencies, security services and justice institutions lacked capacity and means to ensure protection and restoration of rights, rule of law, to mitigate disputes and tensions, and to address violence and crime. This situation in place called for an urgent necessity of establishing and operationalizing community-based reference groups to open a door to new, more positive interaction between the law enforcement bodies and community residents. In this regard, the project provided extensive support to the establishment and further operation of CSWGs that have proven to be effective mechanisms in increasing communities' interaction with local security providers in identifying and jointly addressing various security needs. This constructive engagement led to more than 70 per cent of CSWG members feeling that their voices were taken into account in addressing community security-related challenges, local and regional multi-sectoral consultations inclusive of vulnerable women's groups, have led to development of recommendations on the gender-responsive measures to be prioritized

when designing the local programmes and budgets. In the long term, this will contribute to enhancing the ability of state institutions and local authorities to be more responsive to the needs of community representatives, especially most excluded groups, by involving them in resolving community-based challenges and raising their ownership of the entire process.

The project also stood at the forefront of mobilizing and empowering conflict-affected communities around common goals related to enhancing community security and improving social cohesion. To this end, the small grants fund was launched that resulted in the implementation of 62 community-driven initiatives that have ranged from street lighting, fences, laying speed bumps to setting zebra crossings and installation of video surveillance cameras to increase the safety of the communities. Series of initiatives were also supported to expand the availability of free legal aid to the community residents, especially targeting the members of vulnerable groups.

Increasing the capacity of the justice sector personnel to be more responsive to community security needs remained a key priority for the project, leading to a

significant number of local police officers, the judiciary equipped with necessary tools and knowledge in conflict prevention, resolution, handling of cases related to SGBV and others. Technical and expert support to the Free Legal Aid Centres of Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts resulted in the fact that more than 100,000 members of conflict-affected communities were able to receive quality legal services, many of the recipients included IDPs, SGBV survivors, persons with disabilities as well as ex-combatants.

To further strengthen access to justice, series of efforts were undertaken to reduce physical obstacles to justice-service delivery since without the physical ability to realize legal capacity, persons with disabilities will stay without rights and therefore legally unsecured. To this end, the district courts in Vuhledar, Donetsk Oblast, and Novopskov, Luhansk Oblast, have been

redesigned to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and parents with children. All venues for visitors have been renovated to create an improved client-oriented environment. In addition, police stations in Druzhkivka and Lysychansk (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts respectively) have also been renovated in line with universal design principles and are equipped with ramps and required furniture.

In its interventions, the project worked hand in hand with local authorities, community members and CSOs by meeting and adapting to their needs and demands. The project proved to be a reliable partner capable of providing technical assistance to the local partners in their ongoing efforts to further promote peacebuilding and reconciliation in crisis-affected communities.

Lessons Learned

- A coordinated and integrated approach is essential to avoiding overlaps between different interventions and to ensure consistency with national and regional policies. Continuation of effective coordination, clear division of tasks and timely information sharing among all the partners involved (development, national, local) remains important in effectively serving the community needs;
- The participation of a wide range of local stakeholders is immensely important to building confidence and enhancing security in conflict-affected communities. The participatory nature of the activities carried out by the project, including establishing CSWGs and the security-focused training seminars offered to law enforcement agencies and citizens, have fostered dialogue at the local level and have helped to promote social cohesion and security;
- The capacities of stakeholders at the local level are rather weak, and continued engagement and support is needed to ensure these actors are capable enough to discharge their mandates. This is true of civil society, local administrations and state institutions. Examples include: in many locations, there are no NGOs that would lead from the civil society side; the majority of police working in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts have never had any training (24 out of 32 police officers interviewed at the training provided by UNDP did not have any training experience in the past); and, local administrations are lacking practices and ideas on how to allocate and spend security-related budgets. With regard to these instances, UNDP needs to provide continued support, to ensure sustainability of the proposed mechanisms and introduced practices;
- The processes set in motion by the project require deeper attitudinal changes that go beyond capacity building. The nature of the previous political regime has left local actors passive and believing that the only way to address issues is by appealing to higher-level authorities. This means that the project has (and will continue to) expanded efforts in trying to foster a culture among civil society actors, local administrations and state institutions alike, that they should take responsibility for solving local problems, and that they need to be pro-active, rather than reactive. This attitudinal shift can happen, including through the project's continued involvement with all of the above-mentioned actors in the field;

- Working with police authorities to address gender-based violence and community policing seems to be successful, with the police responding to training with an avowed increase in interest in SGBV cases and community matters, and an apparent improvement in officers' capability to respond. Such training should be continued in the short term and extended throughout the oblasts over the medium term. Its effects will be measured through the collection of data, such as the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence cases. It is possible to use this experience as a model to address other police and security issues, which could further help social cohesion. In that regard, the Community Security Working Groups are a good venue for identifying areas that require attention.
- Low level of public's awareness on the availability of the free legal aid calls for further public outreach activities. Beyond this, more emphasis needs to be placed on working and training paralegals to further expand the availability of free legal aid and counselling to the most in need;
- More activities are ought to be undertaken, like the First Forum of Judges to bring together the judges of different instances and strengthen networks to ensure the integrity in the implementation of the laws in similar conflict-related cases;
- Consider and research the possibility of opening a School for Judges of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to systematically provide capacity building activities to improve their work and expand access to justice for conflict-affected population. The need for such a Centre stems from the fact that judges in the conflict-affected oblasts need to travel to neighboring regions to enhance their skills and knowledge on the latest developments of the judiciary system;
- Activities that have involved building dialogue within local communities have proven helpful and have, to some extent, not only improved community security and social cohesion but also governance and the economic situation. It is thus important to continue facilitating such dialogue processes in the future;
- In general, there is an opportunity for more intensified work (in particular in relation to strengthening dialogue, participation, feedback and control mechanisms) with local communities to strengthen civil society participation to enhance security and cohesion.

Annex 1: Progress on Key Project Indicators

(All numeric results are reported cumulatively since the start of the project)

Rule of Law and Community Justice for Conflict-Affected Areas in Ukraine

Indicator	Baseline	Target (2017)	Result (2017)	Target (2018)	Result (2018)	Source
Number of communities in the grey zone equipped with early warning reporting system	0 [2017]	9	9	9	9	Project reports
Number of Local Development Forums with Community Security Working Groups established and fully functioning* <i>(joint result with the "Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine" programme)</i>	0 [2017]	20	24	24	24	LDF reports
Percentage of the members of community security working groups who feel their voices are taken into account in improving community security* <i>(joint result with the "Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine" programme)</i>	0 [2017]	50%	92%	75%	73.8%	Working group feedback forms
Percentage of successfully implemented small grants projects on community security	0 [2017]	75%	97%	80%	100%	Small grants evaluation reports
Number of communities with regular community security meetings (involving police and local administration)* <i>(joint result with the "Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine" programme)</i>	0 [2017]	20	24	24	24	Working group reports
Percentage of people who thought they would receive justice as victims of crime (in target communities)	40% [2017]	45%	51.1%	50%	Pending	Security & Justice Survey
Percentage of those who have experienced a dispute in the past 12 months and who have accessed a formal, informal, alternative or traditional dispute mechanism who feel the process was just (in target communities)	34% [2017]	39%	49%	42%	Pending	Security & Justice Survey
Average percentage of population in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zhytomyr oblasts who are aware of the availability of free legal advice services	20% [2016]	24%	27.6%	29%	36.7%	Security & Justice Survey
Number of measures taken to improve facilities for women and persons with disabilities to visit justice institutions	0 [2017]	3	10	9	17	Project reports
Number of police personnel and community members who feel comfortable engaging in community policing	0 [2017]	100	180	200	361	Training feedback forms
Number of people obtaining free legal advice through Government legal aid services	17,045 [2016]	42,045	52,482	67,045	101,428	Reports from legal aid service providers

Annex 2: Provisional financial data as of March 2019

Donor: Kingdom of the Netherlands
Project Title: Rule of Law and Community Justice for
Conflict-Affected Areas in Ukraine/00090629
Output/Project ID: 00096307, 00098374

Output	Initial Budget, USD	Expenses 2016, USD	Expenses 2017, USD	Expenses 2018, USD	Budget Utilization, %
Output 1: Strengthened Personal and Community Security in Con- flict-Affected Areas	2 109 255	402 746	761 160	944 085	100%
Output 2: Increased capacity of justice institutions for efficient, effective, and transparent service delivery	1 292 725	161 069	597 846	532 585	100%
TOTAL	3 401 980	563 815	1 359 005	1 476 670	100%

NOTE:

Data contained in this report is an extract of UNDP financial records and subject to change. The accounting period is an open period and data from some accounting processes may not have been processed. Financial data above is provisional.

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