Main challenges

As the conflict in eastern Ukraine enters its fifth year, ongoing violence continues to impact the lives and livelihoods of millions of people as well as influencing the country’s overall development prospects. Daily skirmishes and numerous ceasefire violations have left thousands of civilians killed or wounded, and no significant change in the situation is foreseen for the near to medium term.

Over 10,000 individuals have been killed, 1.6 million displaced and over 4 million people in the eastern Donbas region of the country have been directly affected by continuing crisis. Severe humanitarian impacts remain, particularly in non-Government controlled areas and along the ‘contact line’ which separates government-controlled and non-government controlled areas of Ukraine. However, these immediate needs are increasingly accompanied by mid-to long-term development challenges as the conflict remains protracted.
Continued insecurity has interrupted industry and impacted jobs, service delivery, infrastructure and urban development, and put additional pressures on Ukraine's already overstretched social protection systems. As the crisis continues, these development deficits have become more pressing, with increasing need for long-term integration solutions for displaced people, demobilized servicemen, and host communities.

Of the 1.6 million internally displaced people, more than half have stayed in Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Donbas near the conflict zone. However, displaced people have also settled throughout the country in search of security and opportunity. Nearly 60 per cent of registered displaced people are pensioners, 60 per cent are women, 13 per cent are children and 4 per cent are disabled. While the government of Ukraine and international partners have taken steps to protect and support conflict-affected populations by adopting relevant legislation and allocating available resources, the overall economic situation and the increasingly protracted nature of ongoing hostilities means displaced people and host communities are confronting growing socio-economic pressures.

Years of conflict have left people traumatized and anxious, with many facing protracted insecurity, displacement and separation from families. Increasing numbers of demobilized servicemen returning home from the conflict suffer from mental and physical health challenges and can struggle to reintegrate to their communities and families. Ukraine’s economy means that jobs and livelihood opportunities are even more limited for demobilized servicemen who often face barriers in receiving the benefits for which they are eligible. Mental health services are limited and difficult to access and the need for psychosocial support is continuously increasing.

**National Society profile**

The Ukrainian Red Cross has a nationwide network of 24 regional branches, Kyiv city branch and National Committee (Headquarters) with a total of 663 district branches, less than 400 of which remain operational as of 2018. The Ukrainian Red Cross is responding to the conflict in East Ukraine and delivering longer-term development activities such as tuberculosis treatment, HIV and AIDS prevention, home-based care, first aid and activities related to youth and volunteering. The National Society is committed to strengthening its ability to deliver relevant, efficient and effective services to the most vulnerable families in Ukraine. It plans to develop its disaster management capacity and scale up health programming to respond to existing needs. The Ukrainian Red Cross Strategic Plan 2018–2020 focuses on four key areas: emergency preparedness & response, physical health & resilience to psychosocial challenges, strengthening cooperation & quality communication, and building a strong, reliable, transparent National Society. Although the Ukrainian Red Cross is still adjusting to the end of Government financial support for its 55-year running Visiting Nurses Programme in 2016,
it is committed to modernizing its governance and management systems to better adapt to emerging trends in the humanitarian space.

Role of country office and partners

Ukraine has been selected as one of the five test countries for the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation process. Through this initiative, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is aiming to increase efficiency and effectiveness through well-structured coordination between partners to deliver greater impact for people in need.

There are six partner National Societies present in Ukraine: Austrian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, and Luxembourg Red Cross—all of which work closely with the Ukrainian Red Cross through bilateral agreements. The Ukrainian Red Cross assumes an overall coordination role, nonetheless some partner National Societies take the lead in activities related to certain sectors. Activities not covered in this operational plan such as HIV and AIDS prevention, interventions related to youth and volunteering, dissemination of International Humanitarian Law, home care, communications and social media platforms, are supported bilaterally by Movement partners.

The ICRC has a Country Delegation in Kyiv, and operates mainly in eastern Ukraine, in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, both in the government Controlled Areas and non-government Controlled Areas. Since the beginning of the conflict, the ICRC has been assisting hundreds of thousands of people, and continues to carry out activities including water supply, repair of buildings, mine risk education, forensics, and restoring family links. Ukrainian Red Cross volunteers are actively engaged in many of these areas of work.

Together with the Ukrainian Red Cross and in consultation with ICRC and other partners and actors, key gaps in the humanitarian response have been identified in livelihoods, healthcare and organizational development. This operational plan aims to meet these needs with programmes which complement the ongoing response of the humanitarian community in-country. The plan outlines the results that the IFRC, through its Country Office in Ukraine, aims to achieve in collaboration with the Ukrainian Red Cross in 2019.
**AREAS OF FOCUS**

**LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS**

1,440 **PEOPLE WILL BE SUPPORTED TO STABILIZE THEIR NET INCOME**

4,445 **PEOPLE WILL BE REACHED WITH LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE SUPPORT**

**STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES
- INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS
- ENSURE A STRONG IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS
LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

The conflict has paralyzed economic activity in Ukraine’s eastern industrial heartland, seriously affecting household wellbeing and living standards. The unemployment rate, which was on the rise since the beginning of the conflict, has skyrocketed in the conflict-affected areas in early 2017.

Consumer prices doubled between 2014 and 2016, putting an enormous strain on household budgets. The main causes of economic anxiety cited by host communities are price rises and communal tariffs, while displaced people are most concerned about rent, utilities and an inability to find permanent, well-paying employment. Displaced people piece together an average household monthly income of UAH 2,239 (CHF 85), whereas a host community household has an income of UAH 8,382 (CHF 321) per month on average. Large numbers of displaced people experience a mismatch of their skillsets with the local labour markets where they are now living, and therefore struggle to find work. Displaced women face particular difficulties balancing family responsibilities and childcare with the need for employment and income.

This plan aims to restore or strengthen livelihoods and create opportunities for the most vulnerable households to earn a sustainable income. The Ukrainian Red Cross will build on the successes of its 2017 and 2018 livelihood programming by expanding its cash intervention to nine regions where the greatest needs have been identified. The livelihoods programme will focus on supporting internally displaced people, demobilized servicemen and the host community. Within these groups, priority will be given to households with one or more members with disabilities, elderly people, families with three and more children, and single headed households. People will be guided and trained to develop business plans and then provided with conditional cash grants to turn their ideas into viable and sustainable income generating activities. Supporting people to earn their own income will not only help their financial stability, but also help restore dignity, improve mental health, and facilitate integration and social cohesion.
Key activities are:

1. Orientation sessions for Ukrainian Red Cross regional and district branches
2. Engagement with local employment centres
3. Beneficiary selection and verification
4. Training for beneficiaries in business plan writing
5. Assessment and scoring of business plans
6. Disbursement of conditional cash grants
7. Monitoring of progress and compliance against business plans
8. Detailed post distribution monitoring and evaluation

The Ukrainian Red Cross will work closely with Movement partners including the ICRC to share tools and learning, and will engage with Livelihoods Cluster, Cash Working Group, Reach Initiative, and respective government branches to better plan and coordinate its activities.

The livelihoods project is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
As the conflict enters its fifth year, psychosocial distress is widespread across Ukraine, while available assistance is limited. Family separation, social fragmentation, insecurity, poverty and unemployment compound feelings of anxiety and hopelessness among children, families and communities.

Increasing numbers of Ukrainians returning home from military service face challenges in reintegrating back into their communities. As of April 2017, over 300,000 servicemen had been demobilized after serving in eastern Ukraine, and an estimated 10,000 volunteers have also taken part in the conflict. It is projected that up to 30,000 people per year will join the ranks of demobilized servicemen if the conflict continues. When they return to their families, many people have trouble acclimatizing to civilian life, and often experiencing post-traumatic stress disorders and other physical and mental health challenges.

A 2017 study found that 32 per cent of displaced people in Ukraine suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the conflict, with women particularly affected, and that 74 per cent of those requiring mental healthcare did not receive it. Only 2.5 per cent of the total health budget is dedicated to mental health, and the majority (89 per cent) of funding goes toward inpatient mental health care. Psychosocial support is a relatively new concept in Ukraine and it needs further development and greater awareness to be well understood and accepted.

Furthermore, Ukraine has increasing incidence of multi-drug resistant tuberculous and HIV infections, low childhood immunization rates, high levels of non-communicable diseases and a vulnerable elderly population, while the quality of health services in public institutions is low.

This plan aims to alleviate the effects of the ongoing crisis on vulnerable groups through provision of psychosocial support, focusing on demobilized servicemen, their families, displaced people in Ukraine, vulnerable groups from local communities as well as Ukrainian Red Cross staff and volunteers. Targeted psychosocial support activities will strengthen people’s resilience on an individual as well as a family level, and greatly contribute to the integration, social cohesion and reduction of tension in the society. A “caring for carers” system will be established to ensure staff and volunteers delivering services receive appropriate support through trainings, groups and joint team-building activities. Ukrainian Red Cross staff will be trained in psychological first aid, focussing on how to better understand and support people affected by emergencies. IFRC aims to support the Ukrainian Red Cross to strengthen their capacity in health programming including through building knowledge of the community-based health and first aid methodology.
Key activities are:

1. Training of Trainers in psychosocial support and roll out trainings for volunteers
2. Psychosocial support for demobilized servicemen and their families
3. Psychosocial support for vulnerable adults, children and families including IDPs
4. Psychosocial support for staff and volunteers
5. Psychological first aid in emergencies training for Ukrainian Red Cross staff
6. Three-day outdoor seminar for families of demobilized servicemen
7. Translation, printing and dissemination of psychosocial support materials
8. Vocational trainings for beneficiaries
9. Inter-regional trips for beneficiaries to share their experiences
10. Experience exchange workshop for staff and volunteers
11. Round tables with government institutions
12. Technical support to build capacity in health programming

Activities will be based on successfully tested methods and tools developed by the IFRC’s Psychosocial Reference Centre and will follow the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. Participation in the Mental Health and Psychological Support sub cluster, guided by WHO, will provide general cooperation of psychosocial support activities with other partners in Ukraine, which implement similar services.

Psychosocial support and strengthening health programming contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT**

4,445

**NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS MOBILISED FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES**

115

**OUTCOME**

VULNERABLE PEOPLE’S WELLBEING IS IMPROVED THROUGH INCREASED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE HEALTH SERVICES
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

In 2019 the focus will be on continuing to enhance the capacity of the National Society based on the recommendations of the many assessments and audits undertaken since 2012. An IFRC organizational development specialist will provide technical guidance in enhancing the National Society capacity and accountability. Emphasis will be placed on the development of systems and procedures, strengthening the leadership of the National Society, encouraging resource mobilization and self-sustainability, as well as developing Ukrainian Red Cross human resources. IFRC will assist Ukrainian Red Cross in branch development, resource mobilization, PMER, policies, and other systemic aspects needed to make long-lasting, positive change. IFRC will convene coordination meetings to ensure that all Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners adopt a harmonized and systematic approach to programme implementation and further enhance the spirit of the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation initiative. IFRC will also advocate for one Movement Country Strategic Plan for Ukraine.

OUTCOME

THE UKRAINIAN RED CROSS IS STRONGER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

IFRC will continue to mobilize resources in support of Ukrainian Red Cross while investing in funding and expertise to develop domestic fundraising. A market study was conducted in 2018 which concluded that Ukraine is an emerging fundraising market with significant opportunity. The Ukrainian Red Cross has strong brand awareness and is very well positioned to be able to fulfill its fundraising potential. The recommendations from the study will inform the development of a resource mobilization strategy in 2019. Specialist tailored fundraising support will be provided by the IFRC and Movement partners focussing on activities which generate unearmarked, regular, income, contributing ultimately to the long term sustainability of the National Society.

OUTCOME

THE PROGRAMMATIC REACH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY IS EXPANDED
ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

IFRC will maintain a balanced mix of skills and experience within the Country Office in keeping with the priorities of the Ukrainian Red Cross. The IFRC Country Office will continue to maintain a good working relationship with the other components of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, participating in meetings, maintaining regular communication with colleagues, and seeking technical guidance where needed. Country Office staff will remain up-to-date with revised procedures and guidelines, conducting in-house orientations on new regulations, policies and standards when needed.

OUTCOME

OUTCOME THE IFRC ENHANCES ITS EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

17,000 SWISS FRANCS SOUGHT
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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