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ANALYTICAL REPORT
"ASSISTING COMMUNITIES
IN UPDATING SOCIAL PASSPORTS"

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INTRODUCTION

The full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine has a destructive impact on all spheres of community life in all regions. With the completion of the decentralization reform, a significant portion of the powers to provide social and administrative services, minimum living standards, and the development of well-being and accessibility has been assigned to territorial communities. Consequently, all communities are experiencing an additional burden and are forced to seek their own opportunities and resources to meet the needs of the population and account for the ongoing nature of hostilities.

The Supporting the Capacity of the Social Protection System to Register Internally Displaced persons project, implemented by the Charity Foundation "Stabilization Support Services" with the support of UNHCR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, specifically the activity "Assisting Communities in Updating Social Passports," is aimed at addressing critical gaps in providing assistance to the war-affected population by building the capacity of local authorities to deliver services to citizens.



Within this project, the Charity Foundation "Stabilization Support Services" provided methodological and technical support in developing and implementing a needs-based approach to the provision of social and administrative services in the project's target communities. The implementation of a needs-based approach involves not only finding resources and optimal tools for the process of systematic collection and analysis of information from individuals/families in communities about their needs, situation, and available resources, as well as discrepancies between their current life situation and legally guaranteed rights/opportunities, but also considering the specifics of the populated areas/communities. Needs assessment as a tool is important in social work and in various aspects of social services.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE ACTIVITY

The activity was implemented in 56 territorial communities across 14 oblasts of Ukraine: Vinnytska, Volynska, Zhytomyrska, Zakarpatska, Kyivska, Kirovohradska, Lvivska, Odeska, Poltavska, Rivnenska, Ternopilska, Khmelnytska, Cherkaska, and Chernivetska. Four communities were represented in each oblast.

Among the project's target communities:

3 are oblast centers (Lviv, Uzhhorod, Khmelnytskyi);

30 are city territorial communities;

12 are settlement territorial communities;

11 are village territorial communities.

The total number of residents in the project's target communities is 2,677,609 people, and the total number of IDPs hosted by the communities is 314,186 people (12% of the total number of local residents).

In terms of the number of hosted IDPs in proportion to local residents, the following territorial communities of oblast centers stand out:



Uzhhorod — 115,512 local residents / 27,280 IDPs (23.6%);
Khmelnyskyi — 293,223 local residents / 49,247 IDPs (16.8%);
Lviv — 777,234 local residents / 108,715 IDPs (14.0%).

Also, the following territorial communities:

city:

Kamianets-Podilska (Khmelnyska Oblast) — 107,879 local residents / 22,220 IDPs (20.6%)

Myrhorodska (Poltavska Oblast) — 48,788 local residents / 9,767 IDPs (20%)

Monastyryshchenska (Cherkaska Oblast) — 33,842 local residents / 6,533 IDPs (19.3%)

Mukachivska (Zakarpatska Oblast) — 99,982 local residents / 17,906 IDPs (17.9%).

village:

Fontanska (Odeska Oblast) — 24,375 local residents / 4,365 IDPs (17.9%)

Nedoboyivska (Chernivetska Oblast) — 12,242 local residents / 995 (8.1%)

settlement:

Brusylivska (Zhytomyrska Oblast) — 14,913 local residents / 6,408 IDPs (43%).

SOCIAL PASSPORTS

A social passport of a territorial community is a document that contains information about the resources and social features of the territorial community.

The social passport of a community is a source of information about the community. It is a concise and informative document that contains information about the geographical and demographic components, outlines the social profile of the community's residents, and presents information about the economic state of affairs, the political structure, the educational and cultural component of the community, and identifies certain risks, problems, and dangers.



The implementation of the activity began with the preparation and signing of an order by the heads of territorial communities "On the establishment of a working group on the development of the Social Passport and conducting a needs assessment for social services in the territorial community and the appointment of a responsible person." This is important for further real-world work with the community. ***The order is a directive for local self-government officials and is mandatory for implementation.*** For this purpose, a draft order and regulations for the working group were developed. As a result, 56 orders were issued by the heads of the project's target communities on the creation of working groups, which ensured the systematic implementation of the activity.

The next step was conducting training events in the communities on compiling social passports, conducting needs assessments for social services, and planning the development of the social protection system in the target communities. Workshops were held during the first meetings of the Working Groups in an offline format in each target community (56), which helped the regional teams to establish communication and partnerships with the working group members and ensure their full involvement in the process. Within the project, a unified template for the social passport was developed and offered to the target territorial communities for use in their work.

The communities were directly responsible for filling out the social passports with the support of the regional teams. The information contained in the social passport provides an opportunity for rapid and comprehensive familiarization with the community: its geographical component, population size, demographics, social profile, budget, logistics, management structure, educational and cultural direction, and social protection system.

An analysis of the information allows for the following conclusions. In modern conditions, territorial communities face common threats and challenges in their work to ensure the livelihood of their residents. The completion of the decentralization reform in 2020 brought new territorial boundaries, new amalgamations of residents, new powers for territorial communities, and with them, new obligations. In 2021, the development of the territorial community as such had just begun. However, the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian



Federation against Ukraine in February 2022 disrupted this process and created new threats and challenges.

Since the activity was implemented in the safer regions of Ukraine, 8 of the target communities (Lvivska Oblast: Lvivska, Zolochivska, Novoyavorivska TCs; Kyivska Oblast: Fastivska, Boyarska TCs; Vinnytska Oblast: Hnivanska TC; Poltavska Oblast: Myrhorodska TC; Khmelnytska Oblast: Khmelnytska TC) reported that they had suffered destruction as a result of armed aggression. However, all communities fully faced the mass phenomenon of internal displacement, the mobilization of their citizens into the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the return of veterans home, and families who lost their loved ones on the front lines.

That is why it is important not to leave any social group in need of social support and protection without assistance. Therefore, there is a need to justify measures to improve the quality of social services in communities, to effectively monitor their compliance with established state standards, and to enhance the interaction between executive authorities and the public in the provision of relevant social services.

1. Expenditures on the social protection system at the local level.

The target communities have allocated funds for the maintenance of institutions, organizations, and establishments in the social sphere involved in organizing and providing administrative, social, medical, educational, and other services. Due to hostilities, the expenditures have not changed, but even in peacetime, spending on social protection was insufficient. The emergence of new social groups and the increase in the population of communities due to displaced persons require an increase in expenditures to ensure accessible and high-quality services.

2. Compliance of the social protection system structure in the target communities with the Model organizational structure of the executive body of village, settlement, and city councils on social protection of the population and protection of children's rights (Order of the



Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine No. 868 Methodological Recommendations).

In the vast majority of the project's target communities, the structure of social protection and children's rights protection is built in accordance with the Model recommended by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.

In territorial communities with administrative centers in cities of oblast significance, the social protection system is fully preserved and functional. It is typically represented by a territorial department of social protection and a service for children's affairs with the status of legal entities, as well as municipal institutions that provide social services, such as territorial centers for social services, centers of social services, and rehabilitation centers for people with disabilities, etc.

The communities, mostly small in population, have created departments of social protection in accordance with the recommendations, adding healthcare and youth policy to their functions. Social service providers in the communities are represented by centers for the provision of social services, which include social work departments that functionally correspond to centers of social services.

It is necessary to note the extensive network of Administrative Service Centers (ASCs) in the territorial communities, which ensures accessibility when applying for social services. Some communities have authorized the ASCs to become front offices for any issues related to social protection and social services, ensuring the operation of remote workstations for their administrators in most settlements of the community. For the residents, this model is more comfortable, as it reduces the time and distance required to receive a service. Unfortunately, this approach is not universal. There are still communities where residents have to travel tens of kilometers to reach the administrative center to receive a range of administrative and social services.



3. Infrastructure and Logistics

Common issues in the target territorial communities:

- ***Limited access to banking institutions and ATMs.***

Bank branches and ATMs are located in the administrative centers of the communities. The distance from the community's settlements to banking services can sometimes reach 40-50 kilometers.

- ***Limited access to medical services and pharmacies.***

Specialized medical specialists are located, at best, in the administrative centers of city territorial communities or oblast centers. At the level of village and settlement territorial communities, secondary medical care is practically unavailable at the community level.

The most unacceptable situation in the communities is with pharmacies. Pharmacies operate in the administrative centers of the communities. In other settlements of the communities, there are no pharmacies. Accessing medicines for purchase is a problem in the communities, and providing rural residents with medicines under the state program "Affordable Medicines" is practically impossible.

- ***Transport accessibility.***

Transportation between settlements in most territorial communities is difficult. The difficulties include the lack of public transport and the unsatisfactory condition of the roads.

4. Organization of social services provision.

The priority in organizing the provision of social services at the community level is the creation and maintenance of municipal institutions and establishments involved in providing social services, funded by local budgets. The provision of the full range of basic social services stipulated by the Law of Ukraine "On Social Services" is not organized and not provided in the communities. The approach to organizing services in the communities is



outdated; the institution that is supposed to provide the service is funded, not the service itself.

In the project's target communities, there is no practice of purchasing social services from the non-governmental sector. The inability to provide residents with basic social services does not affect the relationship between the individual and the authorities; local self-government bodies do not offer a mechanism for reimbursing expenses to individuals who have solved the problem of obtaining a service on their own at their own expense.

SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

From June to September 2023, a comprehensive sociological study on the accessibility and quality of social and administrative services was conducted in 56 target communities of the project. This study took into account the opinions of both recipients and providers of such services.

The research included two main components: a survey of community residents (including internally displaced persons) and focus group discussions for providers and recipients of social and administrative services. The survey was conducted offline to include elderly individuals and those who do not use the Internet in the sample. This sample is representative as it adequately reflects the target population and was chosen considering various characteristics such as age, education level, and socio-economic status. Respondents were pre-selected based on their answers to questions about demographic characteristics and whether they had applied for social assistance in the last 12 months. The survey was conducted not only in the administrative centers of the communities but also covered residents of most of the settlements that are part of the communities.

Key observations on the respondent profile:

1. Women predominated among the respondents, with the ratio averaging from 65% (women) to 35% (men). Since the study was conducted



during an active phase of the war, it can be assumed that many men were in the defense forces of Ukraine and therefore could not participate in the survey, as it was conducted in person.

2. In most communities, respondents over the age of 60 were the predominant age group. However, it should be noted that there were communities (mainly in the western regions of Ukraine) where the majority of respondents belonged to the 40–54 age category.
3. Among the respondents, two educational categories prevailed: those with specialized secondary and higher education.
4. In terms of income level, the majority of respondents classified themselves as those who always have money for food and clothing but cannot always afford household electronics or other expensive goods. Only 1% to 2% of respondents have a high income ("We can buy a car or other things of this value"). However, in every community, there is a category of respondents who stated that they do not have enough money even for food, and this indicator varies from 3% to 20%.

Conclusions from the sociological research results

1. Overall, the social protection system in all territorial communities received positive feedback and demonstrates positive results in its interaction with clients.
2. In the territorial communities, the main providers of social services are municipal institutions funded by local budgets.
3. Specialists in the social protection system indicated the need for increased funding for the sector, updated material and technical resources, an increase in the number of staff in institutions, and systematic training to improve the professional qualifications of employees as conditions for improving the quality of service provision.
4. Most services are provided free of charge. The cost of a service is determined taking into account the person's income.



5. ***Residents of the community most often apply for four basic services: home/day care, in-kind assistance, social support, counseling, and information.***
6. There is a certain gap between the availability of social services and the awareness of them among community residents. Despite the existence of a number of institutions that provide social services, a significant portion of respondents had not applied to these institutions.
7. The assessment of service providers shows that residents mostly turn to Administrative Service Centers, Centers for the Provision of Social Services, Centers for Social Services, and Employment Centers.
8. Almost all respondents confirmed the need for quality control over the provision of social and administrative services. According to the respondents, the government and government institutions should be the main subjects of control, but a significant proportion of respondents also believe that civil society organizations can carry out control.
9. Among the common problems in the communities, we can note: unsatisfactory transport connections between settlements in the communities; the lack of a widespread network of service providers throughout the community (concentration of institutions in administrative centers, lack of remote workplaces); the accessibility of public premises for people with disabilities; conditions in institutions; the overload of specialists in the social protection system; insufficient attention to the individual needs of certain categories of the population and the lack of a differentiated approach to different groups of service recipients, as well as a lack of preventive measures to prevent them from falling into difficult life circumstances (limited staffing and personnel shortages).
10. In most communities, participants in focus groups, both providers and recipients of social services, indicated an urgent need for the development of inpatient care services free of charge, social adaptation; social rehabilitation and patronage for combatants, and consultations with qualified psychologists.
11. Despite the fact that the system for providing social services is well-organized, residents of the communities are more likely to apply for various types of material financial assistance rather than services.



12. Modern communication channels, particularly social media, are the most popular means of dissemination of information in the community. Traditional media and printed materials are much less effective. Newspapers, radio, and local television remain less popular means of dissemination of information. Information leaflets and notice boards are also not popular. The majority of respondents actively use Internet resources: 30–40% constantly use the official websites of the communities, and 60–70% constantly use social media.

PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN THE COMMUNITY

A **mid-term plan** is a response to current challenges.

Main tasks:

- To determine the priorities of the problems of the settlements that are part of the territorial communities;
- To identify the potential for the development of territorial communities;
- To determine the sources of resource provision for solving priority problems;
- To establish effective communication between local self-government bodies and the residents of the territorial community.

Based on the needs assessment conducted, the project's target communities developed mid-term Plans for the Development of the Social Protection System in the territorial community. The Plan consists of a descriptive part of the current situation regarding the organization and provision of services in the community, the definition of strategic directions for the development of the



system, operational goals, and a plan of measures for their implementation for the period 2024–2026.

Summarizing the information in the materials of the mid-term Development Plans, the territorial communities have identified the following as the main strategic directions of activity:

- Improving the quality and capacity of the community in providing social and administrative services;
- Ensuring accessibility to social and administrative services;
- Building a socially responsible community;
- Strengthening the human resources potential of institutions that provide social services.

The measures developed by the communities are aimed at:

- Expanding the range of services that will be provided in the communities;
- Improving the conditions in social institutions;
- Ensuring architectural accessibility;
- Creating remote workplaces for service providers;
- Organizing the work of social mobile offices;
- Improving information policy;
- Measures for social cohesion;
- Measures aimed at the integration of internally displaced persons;
- Measures in the direction of family policy and protection of children's rights.

CONCLUSIONS

1. A designer layout of the social passport has been prepared for each target community. In addition, the printing of the social passports is planned. At the request of the target communities of Ternopil'ska Oblast, the social passports have been translated into English.



2. The mid-term Plans for the Development of the Social Protection System developed by the territorial communities require donor assistance for their implementation.
3. The materials developed as a result of the activity's implementation, namely: social passports, analytical reports on the results of the sociological research, and the mid-term Plans for the Development of the Social Protection System, will be available to potential donors and investors. It is planned to post the materials on the official website of the CF "Stabilization Support Services" and maximize the availability of this information.
4. The work carried out in the communities will affect the quality of life of almost three million people living in them, of whom more than three hundred thousand are internally displaced persons.