

MAY

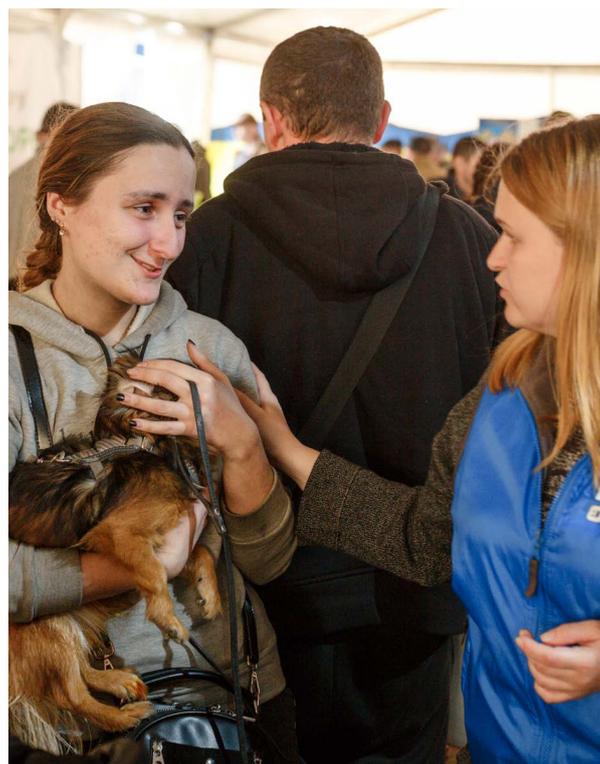
#SAVEMARIUPOL

” *“I was struck by an encounter with a woman from a small town who cried a lot but confided in me the story of the tragic circumstances of her husband’s death and the search for meaning in life after a series of losses,”* – Oleksandr Dorokuplia, psychologist of the psychosocial support mobile team.

More than 600 civilians, mostly women and children, were successfully evacuated from the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol and other areas in a safe passage operation coordinated by the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross on 2–9 May. With the support of the UK Government, UNFPA deployed four mobile teams of psychosocial support to a reception centre in Zaporizhzhia. Coordinated

by UNFPA implementing partner Zaporizhzhia-based NGO Smile UA, teams’ specialists provided much-needed psychological assistance to the evacuated civilians who were shaken by the horrors of war and loss. Psychologists worked to refer those in need, especially survivors of violence, to further medical, social and legal support. PSS MTs distributed female essentials packs and dignity kits to evacuated women and girls.

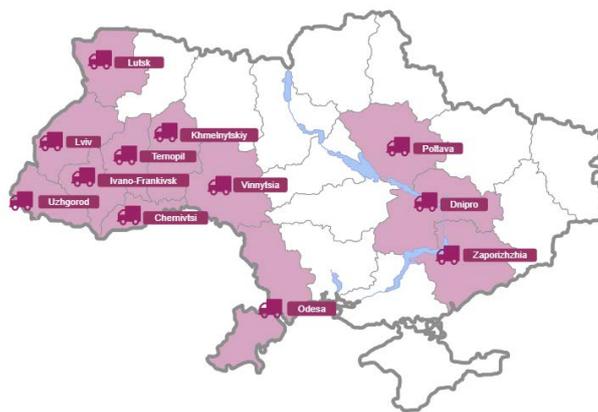
The operation of psychosocial support mobile teams at the reception point for the evacuated people inspired the Government of Ukraine to establish Survivors Relief Centres in cities that receive high numbers of IDPs. Providing full support to the Government initiative, UNFPA works to set up the first centres in Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro. Read more in the upcoming editions of the Newsletter.



PSS MOBILE TEAMS: FIRST RESULTS

In April 2022, responding to acute humanitarian needs, UNFPA launched 24 mobile teams of psychosocial support (PSS MTs) to survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.

Since 20 April, PSS MTs provided assistance to 539 beneficiaries, of whom 84% were women. The proportion in the number of IDPs and local population among their clients varied from region to region. In particular, PSS MTs in Lviv and Dnipro served the largest share of IDPs – 83% and 60% respectively. In Odesa, Lutsk and Zaporizhzhia, the share of such clients was around 12%. Over 16% of MT beneficiaries reported either having a disability or a severe health condition. Among IDP beneficiaries, 25 were displaced in both 2014 and 2022. The main types of violence registered and addressed by PSS MTs were psychological (60%), physical (21%), economic (17%), sexual (1%), and non-GBV (1%). The alleged perpetrator in 14% of all cases was the military of the Russian Federation,



with a disproportionately high share of such cases (57%) reported by beneficiaries in Lviv where the vast majority of PSS MTs clients were IDPs.

Funded by the UK, Canada and Central Emergency Response Fund, UNFPA mobile teams enable access of GBV survivors and people at risk to quality specialised support in 12 cities across Ukraine.

AURORA: DAWN FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

In May, UNFPA launched a specialised remote service for survivors of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence.



An online platform "Aurora", hosted on the "Break the Circle" website, offers comprehensive psychotherapeutic support for survivors who suffered the traumatic experience of violence, in particular CRSV. Seasoned psychotherapists provide long-term individual care to help survivors overcome trauma, restore emotional balance and rebuild their lives. On the platform, survivors can also receive consultations with doctors and lawyers. This can be life-saving for those survivors whose access to assistance may be limited.

All services are provided confidentially and anonymously with high professional ethical standards. Users of the platform can choose a specialist who will provide long-term support and case management to avoid survivors' re-traumatisation and increase the effectiveness of provided care.

Everyone can apply for free quality support: women, girls, men and boys who have been subjected to abuse. To receive individual specialised assistance, all they need to do is to fill out an anonymous form on the Break the Circle [website](#).

"Aurora" online platform ensures access of survivors to quality remote specialised assistance in any part of Ukraine, including non-government-controlled areas, and abroad. Established with the support of the UK, "Aurora" aims to help survivors of violence overcome the darkness of trauma and start dawn of new life.

PRIMARY PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT: METHODOLOGICAL BASIS

In May, UNFPA published a new manual for municipal specialists on GBV response and the community focal points.

Titled "Service for Primary Psychosocial Support to GBV survivors", the manual sets the methodological



basis for the operation of such service in Ukraine. It analyses the functioning of similar services and describes principles and algorithms of work with GBV survivors, including specific instruments and tools, case management and services monitoring. The manual also contains information on the recommended structure, quality characteristics and standards of service provision. Furthermore, it describes the premises plan, accessibility requirements, recommended services, personnel and their qualifications.

The manual will help communities establish primary psychosocial support services, the most time- and cost-efficient service, ensuring rapid response to imminent needs of survivors. The publication adds up to the series of manuals on specialised services for GBV survivors, published by UNFPA in 2020-2021.

WOMEN-LED NGO FROM MARIUPOL PROVIDES EMERGENCY SUPPORT IN ZAKARPATTIA

“We want to help women who are in a difficult situation. We have clients from women who moved to Zakarpattia from war-affected regions and residents of local communities. Many women say that they do not need psychological help because they are used to coping with everything on their own, to be strong. But in the conversations they admit that they do not control their lives as before, and feel confused and slowly agree to accept the help from outside,” – says Ulyana Tokareva, head of the NGO “Women’s League of Donetsk Region.

In May, UNFPA launched a new PSS mobile team for women and girls in Mukachevo district of Zakarpattia region.

Focusing on the rural, hard-to-reach communities, the team is coordinated by the UNFPA implementing partner – NGO “Women’s League of Donetsk Region” (WLD). The team provides psychosocial assistance, legal advice, counselling on social support and stress-coping techniques, and conducts art-therapy sessions. All services are available for both local and displaced women and girls residing near the four state borders of Ukraine. Working in cooperation with the local authorities, over the first three weeks since its start, the mobile team visited 17 centres for IDPs and consulted more than 120 women in need

of immediate support, referring the cases of GBV survivors to duty bearers of Zakarpattia region.

NGO WLD launched the mobile team in the framework of the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme with the financial support of the European Union. Since 2015, this NGO has worked in Mariupol and the larger Azov Sea coast area to develop women’s leadership potential and, together with partners, made a strong contribution to the creation of the GBV response system in the region. Due to the war, the organisation’s team was forced to relocate to Zakarpattia region, but it stays committed to its primary mission, providing opportunities and protection for women and girls.



CAREER COUNSELLING DURING WARTIME

“I am from Mariupol. Before the war, I had my own business. My career counsellor gave me a comprehensive consultation, after which I was able to pass a test and an interview to study IT. I am very grateful to have such consultations because after losing my home I did not have the strength to move towards resuming my professional activities,” – said Natalia, a client of the “Break the Circle” career hub.

The start of the large-scale Russian military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 divided the lives of millions of Ukrainians into “before” and “after”. The war had a devastating effect on peoples’ well-being, forcing them to leave their homes and left exposed to possible violence and abuse. In times of tremendous challenges, it is ever more important to help women find a foothold to rebuild their lives. To this end, with the support of the UK Government, UNFPA enhanced the work of the online “Break the Circle” career hub and adjusted its services to meet specific demands.

Since the war started, career counsellors of the Hub temporarily shifted focus from their usual tasks to providing emergency social assistance. In particular, they helped women evacuate from Volnovakha, Mariupol, Kherson, Mykolaiv and Chernihiv. Hub specialists organised and provided humanitarian assistance as well as qualified legal support to women in obtaining IDP status and cash benefits. The specialists conducted a series of

training for displaced women, where participants could get all the information about available help.

Career counsellors also continued to help women rebuild their financial capacity from scratch. Since 24 February, specialists provided comprehensive support to 242 clients, helping create and implement individual economic security plans. As of May, 22 clients secured employment, while others are actively preparing for it: gaining new professional skills, going through interviews, and building capacity with the help of hub psychologists.

Additional focus

One of the Hub’s emerging areas of work is support to women who lost their businesses due to war. The stories of successful businesswomen are various yet similar, as all entrepreneurs have to start from scratch now.

One of the hub clients had a business in the agricultural sector but could not continue it due to the occupation of Kherson region. Another one owned a dental office, which was destroyed during the shelling in Kharkiv.

To address their specific needs, the career hub, with the financial support of the Government of Canada, started conducting entrepreneurship courses. They help women refresh business management skills, learn new methods and approaches to doing business, and enable successful graduates to receive a grant to start their own business. The project has already received more than 300 applications for participation in the course.

Stay tuned to hear about course participants’ progress on their way to economic security.

