

Ukraine: A social protection country profile for the Ukraine crisis response

An annex report to Blin, S (2022) 'Strengthening shock-responsiveness of social protection systems in the Ukraine crisis'

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Key messages

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Key messages:

- The Ukrainian social protection system has undergone years of reform. Issues and weaknesses remain, such as **low coverage, inclusion, gender responsiveness, low adequacy of benefit, issues with adequacy of local budgeting**.
- It has however proved to historically be **responsive to shocks**, establishing specific programs for people affected by the 2014 invasion (IDP program) and COVID.
- The government immediately **legislated** and **scaled up social assistance to persons affected by the conflict** making their response the largest and swiftest.
- In response to the current conflict, although a number of agencies have held conversation with the GoU, the **cash response was initially largely set in parallel** with blanket coverage of displaced individuals, aligning values with existing schemes and using tax ID numbers as unique identifiers.
- Key blockages to integration are that agencies' request to **ringfence their financial contribution** has not been met by government and that **beneficiary lists** cannot be shared across stakeholders due to data privacy regulations. However, some **progress** has been made e.g. MOUs with particular agencies on IDP registration data sharing and the establishment of a task force on shock-responsive social protection.
- In the medium-long term **cash transfer assistance should be delivered via social protection systems** for most of the country, as part of government's social protection system, **including through the IDP program**.
- This can only be done after the issue of **financing needs and modalities** are discussed with donors, IFIS and the MoF. A high-level **political dialogue** through the HCT and with development donors needs to take place.
- Technical expertise in social protection to further the reform process in light of the existing crisis will be required but needs to be provided on the basis of **achievements to date and with the right expertise**.
- For aid agencies, there are key entry points to further **support shock responsiveness of the social protection system**. These are: a) the IDP program, through revisiting **design and delivery chain components** b) supporting **territorial social assistance units**: setup, modernisation and outreach capacity c) a stronger focus on **identifying and supporting vulnerability**.
- The Ministry of Social Policy has requested support to reach populations in the **East and South through cash assistance**. Humanitarian actors have strong concerns around **impartiality**, the possible vulnerability of cash, and the prospects of supporting social assistance under fluid administrative rules. This will need to be further discussed and unpacked with a **conflict-sensitive risk analysis**.
- As many Ukrainians are working abroad it is urgent to ensure that their social insurance contributions are **portable**; agreements need to be negotiated with receiving countries.
- Finally **social protection needs will have to be properly assessed** during the post conflict need assessment process and recovery pledging conferences. Humanitarian agencies and social assistance stakeholders (including from civil society) will need to engage to support technical assessments and costing and ensure that pledges are met.

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1. Country overview

1.1 Economic context

Population	44.3 million
GDP	155.6 billion USD
HDI rank	74
Poverty rate¹	1.1%
GDI index	0.234
Gini co	25.6
Corruption perception index score	32/100
%GDP to social protection	23%
%GDP social assistance spend²	5.28%
% of population at risk of poverty after social transfers³	NA
Poverty gap % reduction social assistance⁴	28.32

Ukraine began to recover from the 2009 gas supply crisis only to be affected by the annexation of Crimea in the south and the occupation of Donetsk and Luhansk in the east in 2014; inflation accelerated, unemployment increased, 1.6 million people were displaced, and the average household income was depleted by 28 percent; as a result government revenue decreased by 5 percent leading to reduction in social expenditure in order to meet the IMF criteria for lending.⁵

A large proportion of Ukrainians are engaged in the informal economy weakening coverage and contributions through the national social protection system. Ukraine has long depended on labour migration and remittances with, as of 2012, 14.4 percent of the population working abroad, 70 percent of which in Germany, Italy, Spain, Czech Republic and Russia, mostly in low-qualification jobs (construction and housekeeping).

Long term donor support for Ukraine has come from the US, EU (including Germany and Denmark specifically), UK and the IFIs. Notably the World Bank has been supporting the country with a multiyear Social Assistance Modernization Project initiated in 2006⁶ that aims at “achieving significant improvement of the effectiveness of Ukraine’s social assistance system by better targeting of the cash benefits and the reduction of burden on beneficiaries” with three core components of administrative modernization, policy development and monitoring and institutional delivery capacity strengthening. An additional facility was granted at the end of 2020 to “increase coverage of the poor by the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) program (see below), improve targeting accuracy of the Housing Utility Support (HUS) program and monetization of the benefits, scale up unemployment benefits, strengthen the capacity of the Social

¹ Set at national poverty lines <https://pip.worldbank.org/> and relative to the subsistence minimum

² Source: WorldBank <https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/datatopics/aspire/indicator/social-expenditure>

³ Source : Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

⁴ Source World Bank Table 5: Impacts on Poverty and inequality of Social Assistance and Social Assurance <https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/datatopics/aspire/indicator-glance>

⁵ International Labour Organization- ILO DWT and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe. ‘Social security system of Ukraine in 2014–15 and beyond: towards effective social protection floors’. Budapest: ILO. 2016.

⁶ Social Assistance System Modernization Project 2006-2013, Social Safety Nets Modernization Project 2014-ongoing, see <https://ewsdata.rightsindevelopment.org/files/documents/36/WB-P174436.pdf>

Inspectorate to limit fraud and error in the social assistance systems and extend remote accessibility of digital solutions for electronic payments.”⁷

1.2 Poverty Trends

There is limited reliable and comparable data to measure poverty levels in Ukraine: government calculates the rate as per national levels in 2019 at 1.1% whilst the WFP quotes a value 37.8%.⁸ Ukraine has struggled through phases of severe poverty since the dissolution of the Soviet Union- in 2003, expectations of a poor grain harvest increased poverty rates, which were later stabilized around 25.8% from 2008-2013. After the annexation of Crimea and the start of the war in Donbas, poverty increase from 28.6% to 58.3%, and peaked in 2016 at 58.6% in 2016. In the following years, poverty rates declined, and by 2019, poverty rates were 37.8%. Following the pandemic, 45% of the population of Ukraine was categorized as poor. Following the 2022 Russian invasion, the United Nations Development Programme projected that 62% of the population would be at risk of falling below the poverty line within one year. This is paired with an IMF projection that Ukraine’s GDP will fall by 10-35%, and the EBRD has projected a GDP decline by 20%.⁹

1.3 Civil Documentation

Ukrainian citizens are obligated after the age of 14 to obtain a passport or Ukrainian identity card, which is issued by local authorities of the State Migration Service of Ukraine. Ukrainian ID cards are microchipped and contains personal information beyond the scope what is visible on the card. This microchip was a part of a larger programme to digitalise administrative services, called the ‘State in a Smartphone’ project housed under the Ministry of Digital Transformation.

A mobile app launched in 2020 called Diia, linking to the government e-service platform, allows for Ukrainian citizens to store personal documents on their smartphone, access over 70 government services. By the end of 2020, the app had more than 6 million users. As of March 2021, the Ukrainian parliament agreed that digital identity documents could be accepted as the equivalent of the physical copies.¹⁰

eMalitako (eChild) is a digital platform for birth registration, which automates nine services and is estimated to reduce bureaucratic wait times by 10 days- which, like Diia, has remained operational. The Diia app now includes live streams from Ukrainian television and radio stations, which President Zelenskyy has utilised to maintain communication with the public during the invasion. Diia also issued a new and simplified wartime digital ID that contains passport data and taxpayer data.¹¹ The card is available once users update the app- and is recognized by local authorities.

1.4 Financial Service

At the beginning of the war, the National Bank of Ukraine provided unlimited cash to banks and maintained the liquidity of the banking system, continue to refill ATMs, introduced blank refinancing, and provided cashless payment options. When questioned on how the NBU was able to track and distribute cash around the country, the head of the NBU, reported that the Central Bank had developed a network of authorized banks to distribute cash as needed. Cash circulation has decreased since the invasion, despite strong demand, especially in conflict zones. Working groups have been established in conflict zones to provide insight and information on Ukraine’s banking system as well as needs. In the second half of March cash in circulation fell, as people turned to cashless methods, whilst the central bank is confident that liquidity will be sustained.¹² During the 2014 invasion, ATMs had been looted by Russian soldiers and in some locations,

⁷ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/538711474487891739/pdf/000020051-20140626114009.pdf>

⁸ <https://pip.worldbank.org/> Cited in Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine, WFP Ukraine, 2017

⁹ <https://www.politico.eu/article/un-report-90-percent-of-ukraine-could-face-poverty-within-a-year-russia-war/>

¹⁰ <https://institute.global/policy/state-resilience-how-ukraines-digital-government-supporting-its-citizens-during-war>

¹¹ <https://thedigital.gov.ua/news/u-dii-zyavitsya-edokument>

¹² <https://www.euromoney.com/article/2a0nlq78oztufzw703vuo/banking/national-bank-of-ukraines-shevchenko-we-will-work-until-ukraine-has-victory>

substituted by Russian currency. More field information is required to ascertain the situation in the East with regards to cash and cards through the Ukrainian system.

1.5 Vulnerable groups

Official unemployment is at 10.1 percent reaching 27 percent in rural areas, marked with seasonality of employment.¹³

A list of vulnerable categories of people has been proposed by the WFP in a study on social protection, prior to conflict.¹⁴ Single-headed families have the largest income gap. Disability is a main factor of marginalisation, due to limited services available for independent living. The old-age population receiving state pensions are economically vulnerable, especially when living in rural areas, disconnected from state services.

The social fabric is composed of two major groups across linguistic lines (Russian and Ukrainian) and the ethnic Roma; further analysis given the current situation is needed to understand whether this reflects economic disparities as well. Social cohesion along this divide has been an issue.¹⁵ The Roma, like in other countries in the region, are small in numbers, but largely excluded from civic, economic and social mainstream services. Ukraine has a “Strategy for the Roma” and a working group on housing for the Roma; however, the majority of Roma continue to live in substandard housing conditions and live at the margins in terms of access to state services and decent living.¹⁶

Ukraine has a history of child institutionalisation due to poverty (referred to as social orphans) which is likely to increase as a consequence of the war.¹⁷

Gender discrimination remains dominant in the country, with gender norms defined by patriarchal values reinforced through education, media and politics. There is an emphasis on men as protectors and women as supporters, a stereotype reinforced by years of conflict. Women make up the majority of the labour force in paid and unpaid care work and are only marginally involved in public life. 76 percent of women report physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence in the 12 months. Only 20.5% of parliamentary seats in Ukraine are held by women, and 94% of women have minimally obtained a secondary education, compared to 95.2% of men. Children are disproportionately affected by poverty in Ukraine, the poverty rate among families with children is higher than without children, with the absolute poverty rate as of 2019, being 47.3%.¹⁸

Following the 2014 invasion, a contingent of over 1,4million Ukrainians are displaced, and although they have access to employment and social protection, less than 50% are employed.¹⁹

COVID-19 measures have further impacted the livelihoods of older people, persons with disabilities, homeless and displaced people, Ukrainian labour migrants, and those living in non-government-controlled areas (NGCA).²⁰ The COVID crisis demonstrated the scale of digital exclusion with 37 percent of Ukraine’s population reported to not use the internet at all. This will have implications for the uptake of digital solutions in the delivery of social assistance.²¹

¹³ WFP. ‘Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine: Exploration of social protection system in general and for specific vulnerable groups supported with examples from conflict-affected Donbas region’. WFP Ukraine. 2017.

¹⁴ WFP, 2017, *ibid*.

¹⁵ See <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/multiethnic-ukraine-myth-and-reality>

¹⁶ Council of Europe. ‘13th National Report on the Implementation for the European Social Charter’, Government of Ukraine, European Social Charter. 2021.

¹⁷ WFP, 2017, *ibid*.

¹⁸ UN Women. ‘Global Database on Violence against Women’. 2019. <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/pt/countries/europe/ukraine>

¹⁹ Strategy for the integration of internally displaced persons and implementation of medium-term solutions to internal displacement until 2024 approved by regulation of the cabinet of ministers of Ukraine no. 1364-p of 28 october 2021

²⁰ United Nations Ukraine, UN Policy Options Social Protection (undated, post 2020)

²¹ Borodchuk, N. Cherenko, L. ‘Covid 19 Exacerbates Inequality in Ukraine: Internet Access, Availability of Computers and Living Conditions’. 24 April 2020.

2. The administration of social protection

2.1 Policy Legislation

The Ministry of Social Policy (MSP) is responsible for policy and provides general coordination. The social protection system is financed by social security contributions, the State (and donor contributions) and local budgets.²² The main legislative actors for social protection system are the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), Parliamentary Committees for Social Policy and Labour, the Ministry of Social Policy.²³ The legal framework covers categorical and means-tested benefits.²⁴

2.2 Institutions, capacities, and financing

The Central Agency (CSNAP) implements national policies and programmes and coordinates social protection services across the country. A Raion level (district), the Territorial Agency (TSNAP) is the main administrative interface for payments and services, whilst the Community Centres of Social Services (CCSS) and Social Service Centre for children, family and youth (SSCCFY) at municipal (Hromada) level deliver services. The package of available services varies entirely from one oblast (region) to another. Local governments make decisions on priority individuals within each scheme, through means-testing, based on the available budget and needs of individuals. CCSS provides in-centre day care services, home visits, shelter, and residential care services. SSCCFY are community -based agencies that target single isolated low-income persons, large families, families, and individuals affected by shocks (natural disasters, refugees, unemployed, children affected by violence). A network of Public Employment Services is also available to assist job hunters at city and raion level although they are largely underused.²⁵

Budgets at local level are allocated through national level decision-making, and local authorities have limited say in their allocation. Municipal budgets also contribute to social assistance funding. Data from 2016 shows that 6.8% of the total social assistance expenditure is transferred to local authorities.²⁶ Accurate budgeting at all administrative levels does depend on available data which has been of poor quality; the introduction of a single registry, which took place in 2021, should support more accurate allocation of resources.

2.3 Data and information systems

The management information system continues to be modernized; meeting international standards as part of the process of setting up the single registry (UISSS²⁷ connected to the Trembita data exchange platform) will greatly improve the ability of the schemes to address poverty and meet the needs of the most marginalised groups, avoiding duplication, streamlining the targeting process, facilitating monitoring and

²² Cited in WFP, 2017, *ibid.*

²³ WFP, 2017, *ibid.*

²⁴ Laws of Ukraine "On state social assistance to persons who are not entitled to a pension, and persons with disabilities" dated 09.07.2003 #1058-IV (amended on 01.01.2018), "On State assistance to families with children" # 2812-12 dated November 21, 1992 with amendments; "On State Social Assistance to Low-Income Families" # 1768-III dated June 1, 2000; "On amendments to some legislative acts of Ukraine" dated 24.12.2015 #911-VIII, Law of Ukraine; "On state social standards and social guarantees"; "On state social assistance to disabled from childhood and disabled children"

²⁵ WFP, 2017, *ibid.*

²⁶ Social security system of Ukraine in 2014–15 and beyond: towards effective social protection floors / International Labour Organization; ILO DWT and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe. – Budapest: ILO, 2016

²⁷ UISSS: Unified Information System for the Social Sphere was initiated in April 2021 and is set up as unified comprehensive information-analytical system for social protection, designed for the collection, storage and automated processing of information on social protection.

review on information, although this was still being consolidated at the time of writing. The local administrative service centres (TSNAP) now have interoperable IT systems and the network of access points have considerably increased in hromadas (municipalities), including the setup of mobile services for remote communities. The recently introduced Vulyk system, the online administration system that connects all Administrative Service Centres to one platform also automates the administrative unit's work, reduces the load of paperwork on administrators, and increases the speed of service provision. Moreover, Vulyk also enables interaction with the Diia mobile app. A better analysis and understanding of the full scope of the functionality and coverage of the system is needed. 28

There is a specific database for IDPs, Unified Information Database of Internally Displaced Persons, which includes 1,461,992 as of 30/06/2021 and that is accessible to UN agencies supporting IDPs.

2.4 Accessibility to social protection for displaced individuals

Following the 2014 invasion, a social assistance programme for people displaced was put in place, whilst the population in occupied territories had limited access to Ukraine's social transfers. Registration as IDP in the IDP database (and therefore obligation to move to government-controlled areas) is a precondition to receiving support, including the targeted social assistance for IDPs (IDP social assistance programme delivered in cash payment through the). But the situation for IDPs remained dire with high unemployment, mental health concerns, poor housing. The literature reports that the IDPs, and especially children, hardly received the psychological support to help them cope with the trauma of the war, especially in rural and remote areas²⁹ There has been little cooperation between aid agencies and government social services; groups of invisible vulnerable people have been missed by aid agencies and receive only partial support from government and social protection and care services. This prompted the development of a specific strategy, supported by UN agencies and donors.^{30, 31} The strategy outlines key measures to address housing, employment, access to social protection, access to health, access to Ukrainian ID, and support to social integration. Social protection coverage is of particular concern. The strategy assesses that "despite the fact that the State provides targeted assistance to internally displaced persons to cover living expenses, in particular housing, its amount and assignment approaches do not meet the actual needs of families. The existing mechanism for assigning targeted assistance may cause the dependence of a person on such assistance, irrespective of his/her actual needs."

2.5 Displacement and humanitarian response

The total displaced population as of April 5th is 7.1 million³², of which 1.6 million are registered with government services.

The Ministry of Social Policy immediately looked at how its social protection programs could continue to be delivered whilst adapting to the context: the government introduced a decree to make it easier for unaccompanied children to be recognized as orphans or deprived of parental care, simplifying the process for the child and guardians to receive social assistance benefits.³³ Transfers can continue without the need for recertification. On-demand monthly allowance for those who lost income due to the war is possible using the existing unemployment transfer. Benefits are portable from one donbast (district) to another.³⁴ Ministry personnel have scaled up efforts to register IDPs making use of Resolution 509 that gives authority to the TSNAP (local administrative service centres) for registration. The system allows for registration, needs

²⁸ U-Lead. 'U-LEAD with Europe Programme's Support to Improved Administrative Service Delivery'. Visual Report. 2022. https://tsnap.ulead.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/VR-21_Eng.pdf

²⁹ WFP, 2017, *ibid*.

³⁰ UNHCR, IOM, EU, Council of Europe, Luxembourg

³¹ Based on Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons"

³² Update on IDP Figures in Ukraine, 05/04/2022 IOM, OCHA, UNHCR, REACH, Protection Cluster

³³ DRC. 'DRC Legal Alert Issue 79, 01/04 to 15/04/2022' DRC. 28 April 2022. and personal communication

³⁴ Gentilini U., Mohamed Almenfi, Hrishikesh TMM Iyengar, Yuko Okamura, Emilio Raul Urteaga, Giorgia Valleriani, Jimmy Vulembera Muhindo, and Sheraz Aziz, 'Tracking Social Protection Responses in Ukraine and Neighboring Countries Living paper v.1: Living Paper' World Bank Group. 10 March 2022

assessment and is the gateway for accessing targeted assistance and services. A digital application Diia comes in support of registration and allows IDPs to directly alert the authorities of a change of address or of need.³⁵ The Ministry of Social Policy also issued certificates to allow more government agencies to register IDPs, beyond the TSNAP. The IDP registration program accepts data sharing across aid agencies and government - as this is part of the MoU signed between UN agencies and the GoU and is integrated in the application.

The protection cluster has committed to supporting the local authorities with further registration, counselling, and communication at registration sites. The UNDP expanded the “Digital Inclusive Accessible: Support to Digitalisation of Public Services” project³⁶ and is strengthening emergency governance structures. It supported the creation of SpivDiia platform to connect those in need with those who can help. UNDP is already building recovery in its programme through the recently launched “Resilience Building and Recovery Programme for Ukraine”.³⁷

The full architecture of the IASC is in place. By the end of March, the CWG had spelt out plans regarding Humanitarian Cash Transfers and the ability to coordinate with government. The CWG explored options for horizontal and vertical expansion and direct financing modalities. It was not possible to agree with government on a full delivery of cash assistance through government systems, and it was therefore agreed to establish a parallel system. Discussions about using the government registry, call centre and grievance system are underway – as well as a larger support to the social protection system as a whole. The CWG has set up a number of task forces, including one on engaging with government for integration into Social Protection, which will receive technical assistance through the STAAR facility. Other donors have expressed interest to strengthen this task force. At the time of writing the World Bank (and especially the Social Assistance Modernization Project representatives) and the UNDP were not active participants in the discussions in the CWG or the Protection cluster.

There are 28 members of the CWG who had reached 415,000 in 24 oblasts as of end of April– some through their own funding and some as IPs for the above UN agencies. Donors listed are BHA /USAID, Canada, Colombia, DANIDA, ECHO, Estonia, GFFO, Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, NMFA, Sweden. The target assistance with cash is for 1.3 million people. This is a fraction of the overall population on State benefits and of the estimated displaced population of USD7.7 million. In fact, UNDP has looked into what it would require to support those expected to fall into poverty because of the war; an emergency cash transfer, costing about \$250 million per month, would cover partial income losses for 2.6 million people expected to fall into poverty. A more ambitious temporary basic income programme to provide USD5.50 per day per person would cost USD430 million a month.³⁸ For the moment, the CWG has established the transfer at UAH 2,220 (74 USD), below the minimum subsistence level (MSL), but intended to meet essential needs, and assuming beneficiaries will be connected to other humanitarian services. UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR are all operating through cash and beneficiaries can only receive support from one agency. A taskforce was set up to work on de-duplication with involvement of the UNDP emergency management program and their support to the expansion of DIIA.

INGOs under the Collaborative Cash Delivery network (CCD)’s Shared Services Hub for Ukraine response intend to pilot a project to support the transition from CVA to cash delivered directly by the Government-led Social Protection system³⁹. The intention is to work closely with the Government to ensure there is coordination and they will identify opportunities for greater alignment or “piggybacking” on existing social protection schemes where this will improve the timeliness and effectiveness of delivery. The CCD wants to explore options for temporarily scaling up the level of support to those already in receipt of social protection or

³⁵ Update on IDP Figures in Ukraine, 05/04/2022 IOM, OCHA, UNHCR, REACH, Protection Cluster

³⁶ This project is funded by Sweden and started in 2021 and is connected to the Swiss-supported “E-Governance for Accountability and Participation” Project, whose implementing partners of EGAP are East Europe Foundation and Innovabridge Foundation. Also connected to the “U-LEAD with Europe Programme’s Support to Improved Administrative Service Delivery funded by the EU, Poland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia

³⁷ UNDP. ‘Resilience Building and Recovery Programme for Ukraine’. UNDP. April 2022. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-04/Ukraine-offer.pdf>

³⁸ OCHA. ‘Ukraine Multi-purpose Cash (MPC) Response Snapshot (as of 29/04/2022)’. ReliefWeb. 29 April 2022

³⁹ The CCD includes Action Against Hunger (ACF), ACTED, CARE, Concern Worldwide, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Danish Church Aid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Oxfam, Relief International, Save the Children, and World Vision.

temporarily expanding coverage of existing schemes to those who do not currently benefit, to accommodate for the unique needs of those who remain inside Ukraine and those on the move.

3. An overview of emergency assistance, social assistance, and social care

3.1 Emergency assistance

Implementer Detail	UNICEF ⁴⁰	UNHCR ⁴¹	WFP ⁴²	IOM ⁴³	MSP ⁴⁴
Partners	MSP approved by decree Want to support policies and procedures to deliver through MSP by transferring their caseload	MSP approved by decree	MoU with MSP	TSNAP, partner	TSNAP
Target groups/ eligibility/ Conditionalities	Families with 3 or more children where at least one child is younger than 2 Families with 2 or more children where at least one child has a disability (was based on a poverty analysis and is seen as vertical expansion of the child grant program although delivered separately) Non exclusive	IDPs further criteria to be established amongst the IDPs registered in the unified database Non-exclusive of categorical benefits	IDPs and local community members who lost their income	IDPs	IDPs Recipient may not possess a residence or bank deposits above a certain amount and able-bodied persons must use their capacity to work Means tested
Enrolment	Filling out a form at the UNICEF website (https://register.unicef.org/) or through Diia (to be made available); Documentation of family composition and bank details Use of hotline possible	On-site registration with individual's ID	On site voluntary registration with municipalities	DIIA	Through the DIIA application
Transfer value	2,220 UAH per family member with a maximum of 5 persons per family	2,220 UAH per family member	UAH 2,220 per family member	USD 40	UAH 2000 per person UAH 3000 per child or person with disability
Recurrence	Monthly for 3 months - programme is for 6 months.	Monthly for 3 months	Monthly 3 months	6 months	Monthly during martial law and one month after
Target coverage	50,000 families (target)	Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky, Chernivtsi and Ivano-Frankivsk regions	144,000 people (01/05/22) in Vinnytsia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv and other cities Target of 500,000	500,000 individuals (20,000 as of 28/04)	Not entirely clear if this includes new IDPs yet
Payment Mechanism	To applicants' bank account from UNICEF's bank account Post office (for the <20% without bank account)	Post office then personal bank account	Western Union or value vouchers (USD50)	Oschadbank card	Oschadbank card

⁴⁰ DRC, 2022, *ibid.*

⁴¹ DRC, 2022, *ibid.*

⁴² WFP. 'WFP Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries Situation Report #15 01/05/2022'. ReliefWeb. 1 May 2022.

⁴³ Urbinati, M. TCUP Report: The Governance of Social Support for Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine: Low State Capacity, Citizenship Rights Capture, or Both? Harvard University, 2021

⁴⁴ UNDP press release

	Other methods possible: cards, cash				
Time to receive funds	4 weeks on a rolling basis, first payment early May	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Complaints	Preexisting MSP Hotline set up by Child Protection department	UNHCR's hotline	Not known	Not known	Not known
Workforce	The system is entirely administered by UNICEF, but the scheme was endorsed by decree Call centre capacity was scaled up	Partner organizations NEEKA, Nhemiah, Crimea SOS and Right to Protection	Not known	Partner organisations	TSNAP, local administration
Information system	HOPE	Progres	SCOPE	BrAVE	IDP registry

3.2 Categorical schemes⁴⁵

The minimum subsistence level (MSL) which serves as a basis for calculation of social assistance is established by the MSP based on the market price of a basket of goods. It is calculated as a “total of all minimum subsistence levels for every family member as a representative of a specific social-demographic group. According to the law, a household may include parents, children below 18, or students below 23, parents of both spouses incapable of work, a person that lives with an isolated disabled person (a single woman/man). At the same time, persons who are completely supported by the state are not considered to be the part of the household in this case [i.e., people in residential care].”⁴⁶ It forms the foundation for “State social guarantees”. Statutory MSL levels are anticipated at the beginning of the years, and in 2022 are as follows (in UAH)⁴⁷:

	Jan-June	Jul-Nov	Dec
Able-bodied persons	2,481	2,600	2,684
Children under 6 years	2,100	2,201	2,272
Children aged 6 to 18 years	2,618	2,744	2,833
Persons who have become unemployable	1,934	2,027	2,093
Broad indicator	1,393	2,508	2,589

The table below details categorical schemes. Transfer values for given years (in bracket) are mentioned when it was not possible to find the formula for calculation based on the MSL:

Social transfer type Detail	Child benefit to single mothers	Child benefit (Universal Childbirth Grant UCBG)	Maternity benefit (for non-insured)	Disability benefit	Children in care	IDPs
Partners	TSNAP	TSNAP	TSNAP	TSNAP, Fund of Social Protection of Disabled Persons	TSNAP	CSNAP, municipalities
Target groups/eligibility/Conditionalities	Single mothers	Quasi-universal for all citizens and residents	Pregnancy and birth	Children and adults with disability and chronic illness (also applicable to carers) Group I-A, I-B, II	Child's guardian Child	Recipient may not possess a residence or bank deposits above a certain amount and able-

⁴⁵ Information from this sections were compiled using information from Ensuring social security benefits for Ukrainian migrant workers / ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe, ILO 2012 and Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine, WFP Ukraine, 2017 and Social security system of Ukraine in 2014–15 and beyond: towards effective social protection floors / International Labour Organization; ILO DWT and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe. – Budapest: ILO, 2016. And Borodchuk, N. , Universal Child Benefit Case Studies: The Experience of Ukraine , July 2019 , UNICEF The information isn't always consistent. The author made the arbitrary choice to keep the most recent information as the most accurate

⁴⁶ WFP, 2017, *ibid.* and ILO, 2016, *ibid.*

⁴⁷ <https://en.thepage.ua/economy/subsistence-minimum-in-ukraine-in-2022>

						bodied persons must use their capacity to work . Means tested
Enrolment	Application to TSNAP (now also online DIIA (e-baby))	Application to TSNAP (now also online DIIA (e-baby))	Application to TSNAP (now also online DIIA (e-baby))	Application to TSNAP Medical Social Expertise verification	Application to TSNAP (now also online DIIA (e-baby))	Application to TSNAP and now also online DIIA
Transfer value	Child before 6 years old: 100% of MLS Child whose other parent refuses to pay alimony 50% of MLS	One-time lumpsum of UAH10,320 at birth (2020) then monthly 50% of MLS totaling UAH 41,280 (10x the MLS) for 36 months (2020) Value changes for up to 6 years, up to 18 years and up to 23 years old	Not less than 25% of MLS	Between 253% and 85% of MLS (for children) Means tested for guardian	200% of MLS 200% of MLS	UAH 442 and UAH 884 for those unable to work, and 1,130 for persons with disabilities (2016) Compatible with other subsidies and not counted as income
Recurrence	For 6 months	One-time then monthly	Not known	Monthly	Monthly 12 months and extendable	Monthly for 6 months extendable for another 6 months
Target and/or coverage	260,600 (2020) 75,000 for alimony (2020)	967,900 (2020) ⁴⁸	Not known	456,000	76,930 (2015)	632,575 (2016)
Payment Mechanism	Bank transfer or JSC "Ukrposhta" (post office) or JSC "Oschadbank"					
Time to receive funds	Regular or one-off transfer					
complaints	Not known					
Workforce	TSNAP	TSNAP	TSNAP	Physical and psychosocial rehabilitation units. Support for reintegration in the labour market	TSNAP	TSNAP
Information system	Tembitra/DIIA/VU LYK	Tembitra/DIIA/VU LYK	Tembitra/DIIA/VU LYK	Tembitra/DIIA/VU LYK	Unified IDP database DIIA	Unified IDP database DIIA

3.3 Guaranteed minimum income schemes

In the table below, absolute values for given years (in bracket) are also mentioned when it was not possible to find the formula for calculation:

Transfer Detail	Social benefit for low-income families (also known as Guaranteed Minimum Income, GMI)	Subsidy for housing and utilities (two sets) (HUS)	Unemployment benefit	Caregiver allowance	Social pension
Partners	Ministry of Social policy, administered by regional and local social protection departments ⁴⁹				

⁴⁸ This figure was given by government in the report to the European social Charter. According to UNICEF (2019), it constituted 44 % of total social protection for children and families and 0.5% of GDP

⁴⁹ Leymonie, C. Tretyak A. Universal old-age, disability and survivors' pensions in Ukraine, Universal Social Protection Brief, Expertise France for the Universal Social Protection Group (undated , post 2016)

Target groups/eligibility/Conditionalities	Poor economically active families (whose income is below the MSL) Means tested (income and property of the family) Not eligible if family has made significant purchases or own a car. Can be reduced if family does actively seek to obtain sources of livelihood. Not provided if not registered at an Employment centre	Low income, means-tested and covers the difference between the energy bills and the specific mandatory bills amount.	Those not meeting insurance contributions or with disciplinary dismissal	Caregiver of a person above 80	Those who did not contribute to contributory scheme 63/59 men/women or lack service record Received by refugees and asylum seekers
Enrolment	Application at TSNAP	Application at TSNAP	Application at a job centre	Application at TSNAP	Application at TSNAP
Transfer value	Difference between minimum salary (UAH 3200 in dec 2017) and average monthly family income 21% of living wage. Increased by 10% for each child and 20% for child with disability and living in the mountains .	Average UAH 1091 (2015) for electricity, natural gas, heat, sewage, rent Average UAH 1,448 (2015) for solid and liquid domestic fuel and liquefied natural gas	UAH 544 (2017)	Not known	30 to 100% of minimum subsistence level Other literature reports either 100% or 69% of the MSL 1373 UAH/month for people with disability and UAH 949 for others (2017) ⁵⁰
Recurrence	6 months	Monthly	Monthly for a set duration	Not known	Monthly
Target coverage	564,062 (2015)	617,000 HH for each subsidy ⁵¹	Not known	Not known	0.1 million ⁵²
Payment Mechanism	Bank transfer or JSC "Ukrposhta" (post office) or JSC "Oschadbank"				
Time to receive funds	Not known				
Complaints	World Bank supported ministry-level grievance mechanism - Also available at local level				
Workforce	TSNAP	TSNAP	Employment centre	Social services for older people	Social services for older people
Information system	Tembitra/DIIA/VULYK				

3.4 Social care services

Ukrainian social care services include outreach and specialised residential care. It has one of the highest rates of institutional care in Europe with 1.3% of children residing in an orphanage. Social care services have struggled to provide services according to their mandate and services for older people and people living with disabilities are amongst the least resourced. These challenges are partly addressed in a new body of law on social services passed in 2019-20 that revises the scope of social services to ensure better targeting and accessibility, to involve non-governmental organisations and to align with decentralisation of State functions. Local authorities now have responsibility over 17 types of social services. The establishment of working groups to deal with strategic decision making at municipal level will support better service provision along with an interdisciplinary "case management" approach.

3.5 Other support

Subsidies: Ukrainian households also enjoy a whole range of subsidies and benefits such as phone installation, free healthcare, free public transport and free childcare – enjoyed by close to 50% of households. The recent healthcare reform in Ukraine introduced a benefit package that more clearly identifies benefits

⁵⁰ As per the e-services portal in Ukraine, reported by Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine, WFP Ukraine, 2017

⁵¹ WFP, 2017, *ibid* Accounts for 2.3percent of GDP in 2107 according to UNICEF (2019)

⁵² WFP, 2017, *ibid*

guaranteed by the State (primary, outpatient, inpatient, palliative and emergency care, maternity and rehabilitation care). This is not administered by the Ministry of Social Policy but by the National Health Service of Ukraine, using the e-Health system as the MIS.⁵³ This program is referred to as “Privileges” and benefits 116 categories of people on the grounds of social status, professions and merits. Another notable program is the school feeding program in educational facilities, entirely state funded, and targeting children from low-income families, children with disabilities and children with special education needs, orphans.⁵⁴ This program is however not available for Roma children. Other programs support mothers of more than five children and victims of trafficking. Other schemes include support for veterans and students.

Contributory schemes include⁵⁵:

- Contributory pension for employed and self-employed (on average UAH 1656 in 2016, covering about 11 million Ukrainians against a subsistence level estimated by WFP at UAH3035)
- Disability pensions given through a medical social expertise verification and given through a complex system of subcategories.
- There is also a voluntary pension insurance scheme, available also for Ukrainians working abroad.
- Survivor’s pensions
- Long service pensions
- Burial benefit
- Unemployment Insurance Fund benefit: maximum of 360 days indexed on last salary
- Fund for benefits for temporary Incapacity for work
- Employment Injury Benefits Fund

Portability agreements: the State Migration Service (in the Ministry of Social Policy) has signed labour migration agreements with Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Spain which guarantee maintenance of rights and benefits using pro rata formulas between countries. Unless there is a portability agreement between countries, a person who chooses to leave Ukraine permanently will not receive pension payments from their time worked in Ukraine. Ukrainians working in Europe do not always do so with legitimate employment contracts or residence status; in 2012, it was estimated that only 7-10 percent of Ukrainians received social security benefits based on these agreements.⁵⁶ Unless there is a portability agreement between countries, a person who chooses to leave Ukraine permanently will not receive pension payments for their time worked in Ukraine.

3.6 Expansion during shocks:

As outlined above, the government took a series of measure immediately after the Russian invasion, adapting social assistance transfers to the need of the population. The capacity to legislate quickly has been demonstrated through the adoption of numerous decrees at the onset and in the weeks following the invasion by Russian troops. The Cabinet adopted a decree on the protection of the rights and freedoms of Ukrainians who are temporarily displaced in the EU and other countries in order to support with issues of civil documentation, social assistance payments via Diia, consular services, online education services, portability of qualifications, fight against trafficking, support to family registration and informing Ukrainians of their rights in the EU. Amendments to social protection measures were legislated immediately. UNHCR and UNICEF’s programs were also enacted through decree. Discussions are ongoing to expand the IDP program (for those

⁵³ International Labour Office. World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional Companion Report for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Geneva: ILO, 2021.

⁵⁴ WFP, 2017, *ibid*

⁵⁵ WFP, 2017, *ibid*

⁵⁶ Ensuring social security benefits for Ukrainian migrant workers / ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe, ILO , 2012

affected by the 2014 crisis) to new IDPs. The government continues to transfer social benefits, regardless of whether the person has fled. Specific benefits were designed for combatants.

This section describes the measures essentially taken during the Chernobyl crisis, the 2008-9 gas and economic crisis, the 2014 crisis and COVID. COVID so a 2.5% GDP additional expenditure on social assistance, and which was made possible in large thanks to the Social Safety Nets Modernization Project.⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ It should be noted there are still structural limitations and COVID measures could not be fully absorbed in the social security system to truly benefit everyone, most notably those working in the informal sector.

New temporary schemes: Ukraine set up a subsidy for victims of the Chernobyl disaster. Moreover, an IDP program was developed to respond to the 2014 invasion. It should be noted though, many older persons displaced by the conflict have not, or irregularly, received their pension payments. This is because of the change of locality leading to loss of archives, geographically disconnected records and because of the lack of interoperability between the IDP registry and the pension system. The literature reports that 600,000 people saw suspension of pensions payment since the 2014 invasion, mainly because of loss of archives.⁵⁹ Finally, Ukraine introduced limited temporary wage subsidy during COVID.

Vertical expansion of existing programmes: Expansion of unemployment benefits and of non-contributory cash benefits during COVID and during the 2008-2009 crisis.

Horizontal expansion of existing programmes: There was no proactive measure to cover workers in the informal economy although a larger number did enrol in the Unemployment Assistance and Guaranteed Minimum Income Programs, the rules of which were flexed to increase duration and eligibility. A one-off cash transfer was provided to vulnerable families

Additional modifications: The HUS administrative requirements were flexed, and the amount increased. It is during COVID that Ukraine introduced remote registration for social assistance (DIIA) and expansion of payment of benefits to bank accounts (rather than post office collection) through the online application system, improving financial inclusion of the poor and vulnerable. The payment infrastructure was improved. COVID was also a time during which the role of social workers was acknowledged, and they received a surcharge of up to 100 per cent of their salary.

During the 2008-2009 gas and economic crisis, as is typically the case in times of economic slowdown, the expenditure on social security schemes, especially the unemployment insurance scheme, automatically went up, helping to stabilize the economy. In the 2009 budget, the expenditure on state social assistance to families with children and low-income families increased by 22.5 per cent, benefits for children under guardianship or custodianship doubled. However, through IMF guidance, Ukraine stalled this by making eligibility criteria more stringent, widening the gap between unemployed and unemployed with benefits.⁶⁰

Use of social protection systems and data for response led by others: Apart from the IDP program, and the ongoing response, no information was found on the use of social protection systems by aid agencies.

4. Considerations for linking humanitarian assistance to

⁵⁷ Combined Project Information Documents, Integrated Safeguards Datasheet, Second Additional Financing for COVID-19 Response under Social Safety Nets Modernization Project, World Bank, 2020

⁵⁸ ILO, 2021, *ibid*.

⁵⁹ Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine, WFP Ukraine, 2017

⁶⁰ Baranova, N. & K. Hirose (2010), Assessment of the social security system in Ukraine 2008– 09; Crisis response and future reforms (Budapest, ILO). ILO (2016), Social security system of Ukraine in 2014-15 and beyond: Towards effective social protection floors, (ILO DWT/CO Budapest).

social protection in the Ukraine responses

4.1 Policy and regulations

Enablers: The Ukrainian social protection system covers people through the life cycle, is being modernized for a streamlined delivery and has a set of formulae linked to national income and subsistence levels. It's shock-responsive and there is capacity across the bodies of central and local government to quickly legislate.

The World Bank multi-year reform support is the key enabler to supporting the social protection system to respond to the challenge of this and future crises. The regular monitoring carried out by the Council of Europe to ensure Ukraine aligns with the European Charter provides a strong backbone to future reform. UNICEF's previous work on child protection services and family allowances is also an important entry point into strengthening social protection systems and their adaptiveness.

Barriers: Aid agencies have set up large scale cash responses without being able to support existing schemes in the early months of the crisis. The MSP has asked for help to cover the East and to allow the MSP to cover the needs of IDPs. There has been limited focus on vulnerable groups although the intent to do so was expressed in the early days of programme design.⁶¹

Gaps: Like in most countries in the region, social assistance programmes are not designed with long-term poverty reduction objectives but are predominately residual safety nets with short term benefits and narrow target groups of recipients, based on perception of dependence, and weight of benefits on state budgets.⁶² This has evolved in recent years with a focus on the GMI, but there are gaps in the overall coherence of the policy.

Portability of social benefits for Ukrainian migrants isn't guaranteed except where agreements have been signed (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Spain).

4.2 Institutions

Enablers: Digitalisation, and especially the Zulyk platform, helps social assistance institutions work more efficiently, as most of the information and processing is automated.

Experience with the 2014 invasion and the surge demand on social assistance can provide lessons on continuation of services.

Oblasts are sufficiently decentralised to be allowed to receive financial contributions outside of taxation and central government grants.

Barriers: Ukraine has a culture of heavy administration and corruption – this needs to be taken into account, especially when thinking of moving to more means tested scheme, as they are more difficult and costly to administer if the targeting is too narrow, which would undermine the benefits of the schemes.⁶³

The demands on the TSNAP and on social workers in regular times and in even more so in a time of conflict are huge. Faced with the threat of attacks and evacuated from war zones, continuity of service delivery by these institutions is at threat.

⁶¹ See CWG minutes 03.03.2022, 08.03.2022 and 15.03.2022

⁶² International Labour Office. World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional Companion Report for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Geneva: ILO, 2021.

⁶³ Leymonie, C. et al., 2016, *ibid*.

Local budgets do not always match devolved responsibilities in the sphere of social protection. The need to increase subnational revenue and grants is clear.⁶⁴

Gaps: Although decentralisation is an opportunity for a better fit between needs and services, it currently means “growing inequality between municipalities and regions, misalignment of responsibilities between national, sub-regional and local levels for basic and specialized services and a need to address significant gaps in the capacities of municipalities.”⁶⁵

Social workers have not received the necessary training and TSNAP the necessary financing to address the surge of beneficiaries.

4.3 Data and Information systems

Enablers: The various efforts to scale up digitalisation and automation of government services, the social assistance database, the automated self-registration, bank transfers have all facilitated the continuation of services.

Barriers: The Gou cannot share data of recipients of social assistance outside of the IDP program, with external agencies, due to data privacy laws - this was noted by UNICEF as the main reason for setting up a parallel online registration system.)

Gaps: Digital illiteracy may be a major issue for very vulnerable groups. There is no interoperability between the IDP and the social assistance database.

Up to the end of 2021, there was no integrated system to register persons using social care services, meaning that a person may be using one service without the knowledge of another.

4.4 Programme design

Enablers: Ukraine is the highest spender in the region, proportionate to GDP.⁶⁶

The programme has continued to deliver throughout the crisis.

Child grants are reported by UNICEF as having a significant poverty reduction effect on beneficiaries with poverty reduced by 7.6 percent from 2016-2017. It is deemed effective in reaching those in poverty even in comparison with means tested programmes as 61.4 percent of recipients lived in households below the MLS.

Barriers: Analysis by the UN office in Ukraine states that the system lacks transparency. There aren't enough monitoring mechanisms to properly assess the different design aspects of the program.⁶⁷

Although the mechanisms need to be more fully understood, it appears that evacuating from NGCA was the preconditions to accessing contributory and non-contributory payments; this poses ethical questions.

As the situation in the East is fluid, there are risks associated to envisaging working through government to deliver social assistance, if the localities fall under Russian administration.

Gaps: Systematic mechanisms are not in place to adequately adjust the MLS to actual needs and cost of living and further adjust social benefits.⁶⁸

The GMI is adequate in terms of method and approach for eligibility (analysis of income levels, resulting in 72 % the program spending going to the poorest 20 %) but is administratively cumbersome, resulting in many people not accessing the scheme. Studies report that the targeting accuracy of Ukraine's social assistance is

⁶⁴ United Nations. 'UN Policy Options Social Protection'. UN Ukraine. 2021.

⁶⁵ United Nations Ukraine, 2021, *ibid*.

⁶⁶ United Nations Ukraine, 2021, *ibid*.

⁶⁷ United Nations Ukraine, 2021, *ibid*.

⁶⁸ ILO, 2016, *ibid*.

around 33%, and even though the GMI program has the highest targeting accuracy, coverage isn't adequate. The HUS is even less well targeted.⁶⁹

Services for older people and people living with disabilities are amongst the least resourced.⁷⁰ Persons with disabilities in Ukraine receive liminal services, mostly in-kind, ad-hoc and short-time, going against the principles of adequacy and predictability – and outside of the principle and models of a disability inclusive society. Even in the areas supported by humanitarian aid in conflict-affected areas, WFP reports that only 22% of dependent persons with disabilities have received aid.⁷¹

Pre-war, single-headed families had the largest income gap and UNICEF had stated its intent to make UNICEF's assistance universal in this category – but that population has now greatly increased, and more analysis is needed to understand how the MSP is preparing for this.⁷²

4.5 Delivery systems

Enablers: Decentralisation in the delivery of benefits is an advantage. Local authorities can sign contracts with third sector organisations to deliver services on their behalf.

The multiplication of civil society groups involved in the response is an opportunity in terms of strengthening local level response.

The existing UNDP digitalization program, the GIZ Strengthening administration, promoting health care and social services in the Ukrainian border regions and the multi-donor U-LEAD program are all opportunities to support local level service delivery and shock responsiveness.

Barriers: The delivery system is significantly underfunded.

There is a discrepancy between national and local/ oblast level social protection implementation approaches.

There isn't enough legitimacy given to social care services provided by non-state actors. This will need to be better organised to meet demand and increase impact on vulnerable individuals in the context of the war and to deal with displacement and trauma.⁷³

Gaps: The role of social workers has been essentially administrative, and agencies operate in a fragmented and reactive fashion. Case management is limited, and the services provided are often ad-hoc and one off. Social workers are too overwhelmed due to labour shortage to properly focus on qualitative case management. Professional training is also lacking. It was estimated that 1.6 million people need assisted living in Ukraine– whose needs cannot be met by the outreach and residential care infrastructure.⁷⁴

MoSPs resources and capacity are significantly overstretched, hence difficulty to verify information from those who are self-registering, be it on Diia or on the e-Dopomoga under development.

Non-government agencies are not integrated in the State case management system. UNICEF reports that social services in Ukraine have struggled to “prevent, proactively identify, and holistically respond to the growing needs of vulnerable children and families, especially in the most deprived and risk-prone areas of eastern Ukraine”⁷⁵.

More is needed to ensure better access to identify who is being left behind and their vulnerabilities. A more dynamic and inclusive process of evidence-based policy decision-making would be welcome. Social services are not yet sufficiently equipped to represent a reliable safety net.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ The full description isn't provided p66 and 67 of the latest report to the European social charter

⁷⁰ UNICEF, 2020, Ibid

⁷¹ WFP, 2017, ibid.

⁷² Erba, G. Beneficiary Data Systems Specialist, UNICEF on the sp.org podcast 03/05/2022

⁷³ United Nations Ukraine, 2021, ibid.

⁷⁴ Mental health institution, geriatric homes according to Study on Social Protection and Safety Nets in Ukraine, WFP Ukraine, 2017

⁷⁵ UNICEF, 2020, Ibid

⁷⁶ WFP, 2017, ibid.

4.6 Sensitivity to social protection in the response so far

As established before, the MSP participated in CWG meetings, and a number of **coordination** meetings took place. The MSP is aware and has endorsed and legislated the response proposed by aid agencies. The CWG has set up a specific task force to look at linkages with the social protection system. The protection cluster has initiated discussions with Ukrainian social workforce. Discussions around the expansion of the IDP program have taken place.

Two main **hurdles** have been identified: the financing to government that cannot be ringfenced and sharing of beneficiary data that cannot be done due to data privacy law.

The MSP has also specifically requested for **support in the East** where most of the conflict is taking place, but this hasn't yet taken place. Experience in other countries under occupation (see [Annex 3](#)) show the real political complexities of operating through State systems in occupied areas. It isn't clear how the aid community has adapted its plans according to the MSP requests.

Prioritizing coverage over accuracy, on-demand registration, inability to access the social registry, limited disaggregated data at collection point means that there is limited information as to **typical markers of vulnerability**: old age, disability, non-binary gender, chronic illness, victims of gender-based violence, children at risk, pre-war poverty. It is also difficult in that context to assert that the cash response has been inclusive and has adequately address the needs of the most vulnerable people. Insufficient outreach may have left many unattended for.

5. Recommendations in support of a stronger and more adaptive social protection system

5.1 Policy recommendations

Base reform discussions on achievement to date through the World Bank Social Assistance Modernization project: it will be crucial to include humanitarian actors in the reform process in order to properly incorporate shock responsiveness components and consolidate experience from the last fifteen years of shocks and crisis in the country. This is also critical in terms of financing. The reform dialogue should start now and directly feed into future discussions on post-conflict needs assessment and reconstruction planning. Stakeholders may be reluctant to use social assistance transfers as a widespread response to reconstruction needs, and rather focus on infrastructure and labour employment policies – whilst others will want to see crisis-induced vulnerabilities and pre-war poverty addressed to humanitarian cash. This will need to be discussed; it will shape funding commitment and ultimately the purpose of social assistance in Ukraine. Learnings from the IDP program will need to be taken into account. The changing nature of vulnerability will have to influence future reforms.

Defocus on IDPs to focus on the East: the response targets mostly internally displaced people in Ukraine. The IDP social assistance program is part of the government's architecture for social protection. Aid agencies have responded through a separate program; today it would be an option to expand the program, which would allow meeting the targets set in the Flash Appeal. However, the MSP has specifically asked for help to reach populations in the East. they feel that they have the capacity to reach IDPs. How can the aid

community continue to support their people there, even in Russian controlled areas? And/or support those at risk of being under siege/attack? How would the Russian administration see that? Is it putting populations at risk? The cursor for humanitarian principles in occupied territories will most certainly depend on each agency. Experience from Palestine, Yemen, Tigray but also more fluid contexts of intense conflict show that it is possible. Newly occupied areas, in which Russia has established an administration have not been included in this paper, although it would be advisable to gather more information on how public services are “transitioning” and how the humanitarian community chooses to engage there.

Revise the scope of work of the social care workforce: protection work carried out by aid agencies and non-state social care services have broader scope than what social services normally provide. In each area of intervention, the amplifying force of social care professionals on the monetary value of social assistance needs to be thought of as part and parcel of cash and in-kind assistance. Revising job scope, increasing the workforce, providing training (if possible certified and internationally recognised) would be useful investments now for a comprehensive localised response further. The numerous needs assessments should be framed from the perspective of existing Ukrainian services rather than using the jargon and structures of humanitarian aid.

5.2 Technical recommendations

Maintain technical and operational coordination but elevate the discussion at political level in Ukraine: with currently three programmes operating in parallel and a mismatch between the offer of aid agencies and the demand of government, there needs to be a more senior level dialogue within the HCT and between the HCT and the cabinet. Discussions should be about:

- Joint planning: who will be supporting what population, what geography, and with what type of transfer?
- Additional support: based on the outcomes of joint planning, determine what additional capacity needs to be in place. This could be the acceleration of reforms, additional tweaks to the system (for example supporting technical issues with DIIA), etc.
- Financing needs: the Ministry of Finance needs to be involved to oversee the overall investments that are needed
- Financing modality: budget support, programme support, municipal support, separate delivery
- Roles and responsibility along the delivery chain and fostering active involvement of civil society groups

New projects will need to take the outcome of the discussions into consideration and adjust plans accordingly.

MPCT interventions should focus on the most vulnerable individuals. Targeting methodologies need to be developed that can align and enhance GoU’s approach, combining both vulnerability by category and by poverty. This will be an entry point to discussions further down the line with regards to targeting, one of the weakest points of current programmes. The many experiences and reflections of the protection cluster on specific needs and marginalised group and of the cash working group so far on payment amounts, modalities, targeting, etc. are valuable and need to be brought in to advise on the specific vulnerabilities of those affected by the conflict.

Support the government to implement the IDP program at larger scale through design tweaks and financing, not through direct delivery: as the registration of IDPs is currently mostly on the basis of ‘displacement’, a more granular analysis of vulnerabilities of IDPs is required.

In discussion with homrada and oblasts, support service provision at local level: assess capacity in target municipality, propose surge capacity to deliver social care services, support local management, train actors in case management for conflict situation and in trauma management, support in reviewing referral processes and available services.

Review the provisions of the IDP program: it’s set up is not conducive to social cohesion because it singles-out a population. Given the evolution of the context, transfer values need to be revise. A broader

reflection should happen on the set-up of a specific scheme vs using the mainstreaming social assistance schemes.

Ensure that coverage is adequate to guarantee timeliness and predictability: with the MSP, identify constraints at maintaining the flow of existing categorical and means-tested transfers and support the ministry in identifying, financing, and implementing solutions.

Revise transfer values of categorical and guaranteed minimum income schemes to adjust to inflation and other market constraints: this will need to be done alongside the revision of the IDP program. Coherence will be needed in order to find the optimal social assistance coverage.

Scale up automated and digital solution and simultaneously assess how well digital solutions respond to the particular needs of vulnerable people: because household composition has changed due to the conflict, digital-literate members may no longer be able to support fewer literate persons who should receive social benefits.

Review delivery mechanisms at municipal level as part of the TSNAP set-up: due to the many exclusion errors of the existing system, and the reliance on on-demand registration, emphasis at local level should be on outreach identification. Scaling up communication on available benefits is also required.

Support the negotiation on portability agreements between Ukraine and all countries receiving refugees: Ukraine has experience in this field, but the ILO will be best placed to address the issue at scale and speedily.

5.3 Risk and Potential Issues

A number of stakeholders have proposed the options of providing technical assistance to the MSP to strengthen its ability to facilitate linkages with the cash response and to strengthen cash responsiveness. Cash responsiveness cannot be singled out from wider social protection reform. That reform has been the realm of the World Bank alongside of public sector reform programs funded by other donors. There are risks with providing technical assistance without embedding it in existing mechanisms. Discussion with the World Bank social policy specialists, on gender, disability will facilitate collaboration. The technical offer to strengthen shock-responsive social protection also needs to be clearly articulated. More proactive collaboration along the nexus across development and humanitarian actors is required.

Ukraine's integration to the European Union is one of the major priorities for the Ukrainian government. Aside for political considerations, part of what stalled the integration was the imperative to form a new model of social protection and therefore income redistribution systems, currently deemed ineffective, compounded by a protracted economic crisis and political problems, today worsened by the war. The recent report on compliance with the European Social Charter shows that Ukraine is not in conformity with most of the economic and social rights under the Charter.⁷⁷ But this would mean that the natural interlocutor for reform is the European Union. As the US has become the largest donor in this response, conflicting positions and priorities may appear. These need to be anticipated.⁷⁸

6. Conclusion

The Ukrainian social protection system has undergone years of reform. Issues and weaknesses remain, such as low coverage, inclusion, gender responsiveness, adequacy of benefit, issues with adequacy of local budgeting. It has however proved to historically be responsive to shocks. In response to the current conflict, the scope to integrate the larger part of the cash response is significant. To this end, a high-level political dialogue through the HCT needs to take place. On that basis, support to stronger shock responsiveness of the social protection system can be facilitate, especially in the context of the IDP program, support to the

⁷⁷ European Committee of social Rights Conclusion 2019 Ukraine, European Social Charter , 2020

⁷⁸ Bagmet, K., Obeid, H. Financing Social Protection in Ukraine and the European Union: current situation and Prospects, Socio Economic Challenges, Volume 1, Issue 1, ARMG Publishing, 2017

capacity of the territorial social assistance units and stronger focus on vulnerability. The Ministry of Social Policy has request support to reach populations in the East through cash assistance. In non-government-controlled areas, and given the fluidity of the situation, there are strong humanitarian actor's concerns around impartiality, and the possibility vulnerability of cash, and of social assistance. This will need to be further discussed and unpacked.

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