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the People of Japan



# THE IMPACT OF WAR ON HUMAN SECURITY



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Photo on page 1: IOM staff conducting a monitoring visit to Hostomel. Photo: IOM/Viktoriia Shtukun

Photo on page 2: Destroyed outpatient clinic in Kharkiv region. Photo: IOM / Anastasiia Rudnieva

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## Acronyms and Terms

<b>Hromadas</b>	Municipalities
<b>CIGs</b>	Community Initiative Groups
<b>CRSV</b>	Conflict-related sexual violence
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil society organizations
<b>Diia</b>	E-government portal to access government services and digital identification documents
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GoU</b>	Government of Ukraine
<b>HDP Nexus</b>	Humanitarian-Development Peace Nexus
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>IHL</b>	International Humanitarian Law
<b>IHRL</b>	International Human Rights Law
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>LGBTQ</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual and Queer
<b>MHSPP</b>	Mental health and psychological support
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organizations
<b>Oblast</b>	Province
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office for High Commission of Human Rights
<b>PLWD</b>	Persons Living with Disabilities
<b>SES</b>	State Emergency Service
<b>Triple Nexus</b>	Humanitarian-Development Peace Nexus
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UNTFHS</b>	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Study Rationale

To inform its future programming in Ukraine, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commissioned a Human Security Rapid Study in five hromadas to understand the consequences of war on human security among the host, displaced and returnee populations. The study focuses on the period following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and forms part of the Human Security Solutions for Ukraine project funded by the Government of Japan. It is not comprehensive but provides a rapid overview and analysis of the situation intended to enhance the evidence base for stakeholders to respond to human security threats.

## Methodology

IOM selected five hromadas in the Oblasts of Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Poltava for the study based on the high levels of destruction, large numbers of returnees and planned IOM interventions. Qualitative research using open-ended question guides was conducted with nine focus groups (three in each oblast in five hromadas) and 17 key informants, based in various locations in Ukraine. Despite efforts to achieve a gender balance, the majority of participants were women. The study also failed to elicit responses from many returnees.<sup>1</sup>

Oblast	Hromada
Kyiv	Bila Tserkva
Chernihiv	Chernihiv, Pryluky
Poltava	Poltava, Kremenchuk

## Human Security

Human Security is defined as 'freedom from fear', 'freedom from want' and 'freedom to live in dignity'. This study focused on three dimensions of human security:

- *Personal security*: the study explores the immediate impact of physical violence and threats of violence from the war and their consequences for individuals.

- *Community security*: the war has forcibly displaced large numbers of people, creating host, displaced and returnee populations. This challenging situation can create new or exacerbate existing tensions between different population groups.
- *Political security*: Political security is provided by the state and includes the protection and promotion of human rights, equitable distribution of services and legal identity.

## Findings

The following impacts of the war on human security were identified throughout the interview and focus group discussions in the five locations included in the study:

## Personal Security

- The negative impact on the mental health of all population groups affects the ability of some individuals to function effectively in daily life and, in some cases, leads to tension and arguments with others and undermines social cohesion by feeding into the tensions between host and displaced populations and the distrust between Ukrainian and Russian speakers.
- People report an increase in irritability, loss of patience and increased anger towards others. This has at times led to an increase in interpersonal physical violence, including gender-based violence (GBV).
- Forced displacement and destruction of infrastructure have contributed to unemployment, exhausting of savings and, in some cases, reduction in social protection payments. Some men are shunning formal employment and interaction with the authorities to avoid conscription. This coupled with the increase in persons with disabilities is reducing household income and increasing the burden on those who can work and/or access social protection, often women, to support their families and relatives.
- Individuals are increasingly resorting to negative coping mechanisms to help them cope with the mental trauma caused by the war and to meet their and their families' needs.
- The use of weapons is causing immediate death and injury and creating a long-term threat. Contamination

<sup>1</sup> More information about participants in the study is on page 13 and in Annex 2. The sixth study location, Ivankiv, was dropped by IOM during the inception phase as it was believed that information already existed about this location.

from landmines and explosive ordnance deters safe access, impeding mobility and income generation activities and putting the lives at risk of those who deliberately or inadvertently enter contaminated areas. The proliferation of firearms is adding to insecurity as criminal gangs can obtain weapons more easily and individuals are reportedly resorting to their use during interpersonal disputes.

- Displacement and conscription have disrupted power dynamics between men and women and challenged gendered roles of men and women as breadwinners and homemakers respectively. More women are assuming more decision-making and income generating responsibilities in the households in addition to their domestic responsibilities. Simultaneously, militarization is becoming synonymous with masculinity while men are becoming more dependent on their relatives, often female, for economic support as they avoid formal employment opportunities to evade conscription. At the same time, displacement and subsequent access to social protection has enabled some women to escape abusive relationships. Additionally, increased mental stressors, physical separation, different experiences and reluctance or inability to communicate feelings is leading to higher divorce rates.
- The war and displacement have disrupted childhood and education, increased children's protection risks and negatively affected their mental health and development of social skills.
- Veterans and their families need support with the reintegration process through access to appropriate social services and empowerment.
- Though not prominent, human trafficking risk continues to exist and could increase due to the ongoing war.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provided for IOM appear in full at the end of the report.

### Research & analysis

IOM should initiate further research and analysis to streamline its interventions and understand how interventions might promote or undermine social cohesion. Research and analysis should be conflict-sensitive

### Community Security

- Vulnerable and marginalized groups have become more vulnerable, and inequalities have increased.
- The war has exacerbated pre-existing social and political tensions and created tensions between host, displaced and returnee population groups. Chernihiv reported more positive relationships between host and displaced populations than the other locations included in the study. Study participants speculated that this is because of Chernihiv's previous experience of hosting displaced populations and the use of Russian by the inhabitants, which reduced the barriers and suspicion faced by Russian speakers displaced from the east of Ukraine.
- The number of persons living with disabilities is increasing; however, their access to support is limited.

### Political security

- Provision of public services has deteriorated since the start of the conflict, due to damage to social infrastructure and displacement of public servants.
- Unequal or perceived unequal access to services and distribution of resources is creating or exacerbating existing tensions among different population groups.
- Access to legal identity documents and other official documentation is impeding freedom of movement and access to services, social protection, and the job's market.
- Poor coordination among government, international and local stakeholders is undermining the social contract and the impact of assistance.
- National security concerns are taking precedent over the implementation of human rights legislation and policies, including those addressing gender-based violence, disability rights and mine action.

and be inclusive of gender, disability and social, economic and political vulnerabilities, shedding light on how human security dynamics are connected to various vulnerabilities.

### Inclusive and sustainable interventions

To avoid the aid-dependency of beneficiaries and adopt a long-term recovery approach, it is important to design interventions that are conducive to the transition

from humanitarian to development actions. Localized approaches will allow drivers of tensions to be effectively addressed through initiatives that are designed and carried out by local communities, which would enhance the sustainability of the action. To this purpose, IOM should design comprehensive multi-sectoral interventions to tackle human security issues, which may include activities on social cohesion, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPHSS), protection, economic development and livelihoods, education, and human rights, with below recommendations in consideration.

### Good governance and empowered local actors

IOM should strengthen their partnerships with the Government of Ukraine and civil society through interventions on human security.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 is causing 'widespread death, destruction, displacement and suffering.'<sup>2</sup> In September 2023, almost 6.2 million people had been recorded to be displaced abroad<sup>3</sup> and an estimated 5.1 million people were internally displaced as of June 2023, sixty per cent of whom had been internally displaced for over a year.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, an estimated 2.8 million people had returned to their place of habitual residence either from abroad or from internal displacement.<sup>5</sup> Civilian infrastructure, including educational and medical facilities, has been destroyed and economic activity has been severely impacted. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated to have declined by up to 45 per cent in 2022.<sup>6</sup> Livelihoods and markets have been disrupted, particularly in the southern and eastern oblasts.<sup>7</sup> Half of all business are estimated to have ceased activities<sup>8</sup> and 30 per cent of pre-war employment has been lost.<sup>9</sup>

2 OCHA, 2023: 7

3 UNHCR, 12 September 2023

4 IOM, 2023b: 1

5 OCHA, 2023a: 14

6 ILO, 2022: 4

7 OCHA, 2023a: 7

8 ILO, 2022: 4

9 ILO, 2022: 5

An IOM Survey from October 2022 concluded that 85 per cent of the population of Ukraine had been negatively affected by the war in at least one of the following ways: deterioration of mental health; death of a relative or loved one; separation from relatives or loved ones; loss of income; loss of employment; inability to meet basic needs; loss of savings or assets; hunger; and life under occupation.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.1 Study Rationale

To inform its future programming in Ukraine, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has commissioned a Human Security Rapid Study to understand the consequences of war on human security in target locations among the different demographic and socioeconomic groups that comprise the host, returnee and displaced populations. The study focuses on the period following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 but also considers the longer-term repercussions of the war for human security since 2014. It is not a comprehensive study; instead, it provides a rapid overview and analysis of the situation intended to enhance the evidence-base for all stakeholders to respond to critical threats to human security in affected communities (see annex 4 for Terms of Reference). In particular, the study aims to:

Identify specific challenges and peculiarities pertinent to human security in Ukraine, suggestions on the most effective and sustainable ways to contribute to designing human security solutions and strengthen social cohesion to inform Government action;

Provide recommendations on specific IOM interventions that could help contribute to sustainable human security solutions and boost community engagement and participation in Ukraine.

The research combines a desk review of relevant documentation and consultations with individuals and groups among a range of national and international stakeholders from the national and local levels. The research was conducted in five hromadas in Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Poltava Oblasts. They were selected because of the high levels of destruction and large numbers of returnees. There are also a number of ongoing and planned IOM interventions in the selected locations, in particular those intended to promote social cohesion.

The study forms part of the Human Security Solutions for Ukraine project funded by the Government of Japan. The

10 USAID, IOM, IS: 2022: 5

research was conducted in English and Ukrainian and drew on literature written in both languages. The final report was written in English and then translated into Ukrainian and is publicly available in both languages.

## 1.2 Key Concepts

The analytical framework of the study is drawn from IOM Ukraine's Human Security Solutions for Ukraine project, funded by the Government of Japan.

**Human security** is defined as 'freedom from fear', 'freedom from want' and 'freedom to live in dignity' and has seven dimensions – economic, food, health, personal, environmental, community and political.<sup>11</sup> The concept shifts the focus from state security to the protection of individuals and their well-being.<sup>12</sup> It recognizes the links between 'peace, development and human rights' and advocates a 'comprehensive' approach that fosters 'national ownership' and responds to 'context specific' 'political, economic, social and cultural conditions' to address multiple needs in complex environments.<sup>13</sup> Governments retain primary responsibility for human security and the role of the international community is to support governments from the local to national levels 'to respond to current and emerging threats'.<sup>14</sup> The approach helps to raise the profile of the population's concerns among the Ukrainian government and international partners as post-war recovery processes are initiated. Human security is also consistent with the localization agenda, as it is 'people-centred', promotes 'national ownership' and emphasises the role of the government, as the primary duty-bearer, in protecting human security.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of using a human security framework for context analysis is to understand how different aspects of people's lives are affected by particular events in the immediate and long-term to facilitate the design of interventions that minimize the impact of contemporary and future threats by addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities.

The **Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus** or triple nexus combines humanitarian, development and peace interventions to address multiple needs simultaneously in complex environments to improve immediate and long-term outcomes. The nexus approach can be applied to programmes implemented by one entity, or a collection of complementary activities implemented by

multiple entities.<sup>16</sup> The emphasis on each element of the nexus depends on the specific context and should change in response to changing circumstances.<sup>17</sup> In some instances, all three types of interventions are needed, in others, perhaps only a double nexus combining two of three elements will be necessary. Interventions should be designed, implemented, and monitored with reference to each element of the triple nexus to maximize their effectiveness in addressing different needs and to understand the scope of their impact. The nexus elements are often defined as:

- *Humanitarian*: Interventions are intended to be short-term and focus on saving lives and providing basic needs. Implemented at the local level, such interventions are usually internationally supported. Some outcomes may be sustainable.
- *Development*: Interventions occur at multiple levels to promote development. Outcomes are sustainable and interventions should become self-sustaining or sustainable without international support.
- *Peace*: interventions should occur immediately but have long-term goals to promote security and stability and to promote and protect social cohesion.

IOM's Vision for Response, Resilience, Recovery and Reconciliation (4R) in Ukraine brings together human security and HDP Nexus approaches through multi-sectoral interventions in collaboration with a range of actors including the Government of Ukraine (GoU), international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs) and local populations. While addressing immediate needs, the 4R Vision applies 'development-principled approaches to programming and service provision' through prevention-oriented responses, to promote resilience, recovery, and reconciliation. Interventions for the 4R Vision are intended to operate simultaneously at the levels of individuals, communities, and societies to promote dignity, human rights, and a collective future.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.3 Scope of the Study

The Human Security Rapid Study aims to enhance the evidence-base for all stakeholders to respond to critical threats to human security among affected populations. It focuses on personal, community and political security and examines other dimensions of human security that

11 UNDP, 1994

12 Alkire, 2003; Jolly and Ray 2006:1

13 General Assembly Resolution 66/290 2012

14 General Assembly Resolution 66/290 2012

15 GCSP, 2023

16 IOM, 2023

17 IOM, 2020; IOM, 2023c

18 IOM 2022a



emerged during the research,<sup>19</sup> from three perspectives: personal security, community security and political security. It aims to explore the vulnerabilities and resilience of host, returnee and displaced populations and identifies other demographic and socioeconomic factors such as sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and membership of a minority group, that might exacerbate these vulnerabilities or strengthen resilience. The scope of the study and definitions for key terms have been developed by combining the conceptual understanding of human security, the triple nexus and the 4R Vision with the contextual understanding of Ukraine through document review and IOM's requirements.



**Personal security:** *The study explores the immediate impact of the physical violence and threats of violence from the war and their consequences for individuals. Immediate impacts of the violence from the war are related to death, injury, trauma, and mental health. The consequences of these impacts include physical violence, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual and gender-based violence, child labour, human trafficking, trauma, mental health issues, financial worries, and uncertainties in daily life.*



**Community security:** *The war has forcibly displaced large numbers of people, creating host, displaced and returnee populations. This challenging situation can create new or exacerbate existing tensions between different population groups and lead to anger, physical threats and discrimination based on group-identity. Such tensions and discrimination can threaten cultures and traditions.*



**Political security:** *Political security is provided by the state and includes the protection and promotion of human rights, access to justice, equitable distribution of services and legal identity.*

These three types of security are not discrete but deliberately interlinked to encourage a comprehensive response to a situation to address root causes. The analysis for this study is organized on three levels: personal security is applied to the individual; community security is applied to different demographic and socioeconomic population groups; and political security is applied to governance administrative levels from the hromada to the oblast and national level.

**Demographic and Socioeconomic groups:** The study aims to understand the impact of the war on human security from the perspectives of three main groups – the hosts, displaced and returnees. The study has been designed in a gender-sensitive way to understand how the war has affected men and women. The study also considers how other groups have been affected by the war including: youth, working age adults, older persons, those living with physical and mental disabilities, ethnic minorities, minority groups including LGBTQI+ and those speaking other languages. The purpose is to understand how different demographic and socioeconomic groups have been affected by the war, which groups have multiple vulnerabilities and which groups have greater sources of resilience because of their specific identity.

**Social Cohesion:** Social cohesion is related to community and political security. It is understood on two main levels: the ability of the government and society to create equality among the people and the degree of cooperation and goodwill among the population in their daily lives. The Council of Europe defines social cohesion as 'the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding polarisation.'<sup>20</sup> Governments promote social cohesion through social protection, redistribution of wealth, protection of human rights and promotion of equality. Among the population, social cohesion translated to a sense of belonging, mutual-respect, tolerance of difference and a perception of equality.

**Resilience:** Resilience in the context of humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and security operations is 'the ability of individuals, households, communities, cities, institutions, systems, and societies to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently, and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning and without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and well-being for all.'<sup>21</sup> Levels of resilience fluctuate according to the context and the resources of individuals and specific population groups.

**Vulnerabilities:** Vulnerabilities 'are long-term factors that weaken the ability to cope and recover from sudden onset and protracted crises.'<sup>22</sup> Vulnerabilities can be hidden until exposed by a shock and change overtime in reaction to the context. Some demographic and socioeconomic groups are more vulnerable than others such as older persons, members of ethnic minorities and those with few financial resources. Forced migration often exposes vulnerabilities.<sup>23</sup>

19 The definitions for the different dimensions of human security used in study this draw on numerous written resources including: Alkine, 2003; Jolly and Ray, 2006; UNDP, 1994; and UN Human Security Trust Fund, 2011.

20 Council of Europe, 2004: 3

21 IOM, 2019: 182

22 March et al., 1999:79

23 IOM, 2019

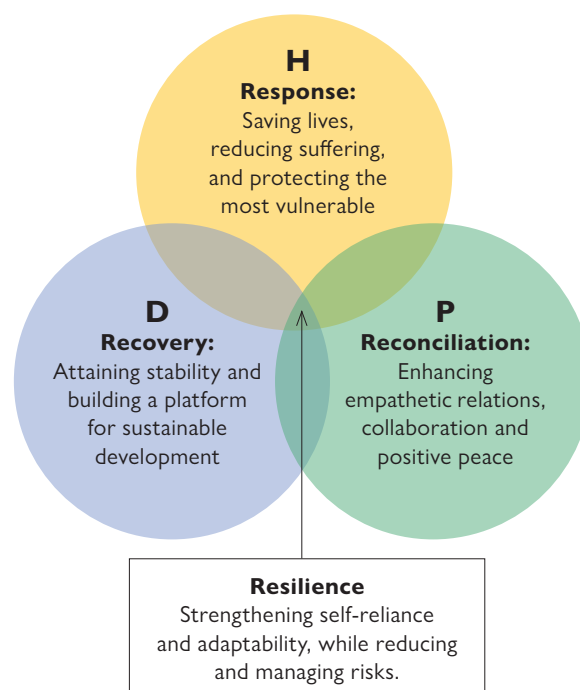
<b>IOM 4R Vision</b>		<b>Resilience:</b> Strengthening self-reliance & adaptability, while reducing & managing risks	<b>Response:</b> Saving lives, reducing suffering, and protecting the most vulnerable	<b>Recovery:</b> Attaining stability and building a platform for sustainable development	<b>Reconciliation:</b> Enhancing empathetic relations, collaboration and positive peace
			<b>HDP Nexus</b>		
<b>Human Security</b>	<b>Vulnerabilities</b>	<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Humanitarian interventions</b>	<b>Development interventions</b>	<b>Peace Interventions</b>
<b>Personal</b> <b>Community</b> <b>Political</b>	Factors that weaken the ability to cope and recover from sudden onset and chronic crises	The capacity to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover from sudden onset and chronic crises	Short-term interventions to save lives and meet basic needs.	Long-term interventions at multiple levels to promote sustainable development	Immediate interventions with long-term goals to promote and protect social cohesion.

Advocates of interventions that work across sectors to address a range of needs and to promote multiple outcomes argue that the positive impact of coordinated and complementary activities is greater than the sum of their parts. The United Nations Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) suggests that ‘a focus on human security strengthens the linkages between peace, development and human rights’ and helps to break down ‘organisational barriers’ by encouraging cooperation among entities with different areas of expertise.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, engagements across the three areas of the HDP nexus are mutually reinforcing. IOM’s 4R Vision is premised on a belief that ‘integrated solutions’ are necessary to address humanitarian and development needs and to promote sustainable development and stability.<sup>25</sup> The UN Transition Framework (2022-2023) for Ukraine promotes a triple nexus approach and is premised on the belief that development interventions to promote post-war recovery should be ongoing and implemented alongside immediate life-saving activities. The Transitional Framework emphasizes the imperative of working in strong partnership with the GoU and supporting the GoU to implement its policies.<sup>26</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the table below shows how the different concepts and the terminology used in these concepts are related to each other.

The Venn diagram, which is often used to illustrate the HDP nexus, shows how the 4R Vision aligns with the triple nexus and how the different elements of the 4R Vision and the nexus relate to each other to form the triple nexus that promotes resilience and the double nexus of:

- Response and Recovery: Humanitarian and development
- Response and Reconciliation: Humanitarian and peace
- Recovery and Reconciliation: Development and peace



## 1.4 Methodology

The study combines information from a document review with primary research conducted remotely through video and audio calls and in-person through field visits to five locations:

<b>Oblast</b>	<b>Hromada</b>
Kyiv	Bila Tserkva
Chernihiv	Chernihiv, Pryluky
Poltava	Poltava, Kremenchuk

<sup>24</sup> UN TFHS, 2021b

<sup>25</sup> IOM, 2022a: 1

<sup>26</sup> UN, 2023

Primary research was conducted in English and Ukrainian through individual and focus group discussions (FGDs). Questions were open-ended and free-flowing to allow study participants to dictate the focus and direction of the discussion and to ensure that researchers' preconceived ideas and biases do not overlook important issues and limit the scope of the research. The term 'political security' was considered sensitive and was replaced by the terms 'human rights' and 'services' during the FGDs. The question guides were translated into Russian as well as Ukrainian before the primary research began to ensure that the national consultants were prepared to facilitate discussions in Russian, if necessary. However, most participants spoke Ukrainian most of the time, although a few occasionally switched to Russian.

The researchers conducting this study elicited the help of the Community Security Working Groups (CSWG) and Community Initiative Groups (CIGs) operating in the study locations to identify study participants and organize the FGDs. Study participants include key informants working with international, national, and community-based organizations that provide a range of assistance to host, displaced and returnee populations, as well as individuals from those populations. Efforts were also made to include people from different demographic and socioeconomic groups in the primary research. Where this was not possible, the information for the study has been supplemented by existing reports. See Annex 2 for information about the study participants and Annex 3 for a copy of the question.

The participants in the FGDs are summarized in the table below.

Date	Location	Men	Women	Host	IDP	Returnee
1 June 2023	1 Bila Tserkva	1	7	2	4	2
1 June 2023	2 Bila Tserkva	0	6	6	0	0
2 June 2023	3 Bila Tserkva	4	4	5	2	1
8 June 2023	1 Pryluky	5	11	15	0	1
9 June 2023	1 Chernihiv	0	3	3	0	0
9 June 2023	2 Chernihiv	3	5	6	1	1
19 June 2023	1 Poltava	0	6	4	1	1
19 June 2023	2 Poltava	1	8	5	4	0
20 June 2023	1 Kremenchuk	3	5	4	3	1
<b>Total</b>		17	55	50	15	7

All the focus group participants were above 18 years old, and the majority were of working age. In each location, one of the FGDs was held with volunteers and staff from community-based organizations (CBOs), humanitarian and

development organisations.<sup>27</sup> The FGDs were also inclusive of people with disabilities; for example, the FGD in Pryluky had 14 participants with disabilities.

The study faced challenges in achieving gender balance and equal distribution of the host, IDP and returnee populations among the FGD participants. Three-quarters of the FGD participants were women, as men were relatively reluctant to participate in the discussions and share their opinions, possibly due to the fear of mobilization. There were more participants from the host than the IDP population; therefore, information about IDPs has been supplemented by key informant interviews and the document review. Very few of the FGD participants identified as returnees. This could be due to some of the participants not identifying themselves as returnees, as they were displaced for a relatively short time. Additionally, some returnees may have felt that their status is stigmatized by those who remained or consider themselves as part of the host population, as they have returned home.

## Constraints

This is a rapid study; therefore, the scope of the report is limited to what was feasible within the time and resources available. It was conducted in specific geographical locations and the findings should not be assumed to be representative of other locations in Ukraine without additional research.

Although also affected by the war, the researchers endeavoured to minimize their personal biases to accurately reflect the reality and identify the vulnerabilities and needs of the study participants.

<sup>27</sup> In Chernihiv, two participants could not attend the FGDs, as they were engaged in providing humanitarian support to the emergency situation caused by the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka dam.

## 2. HUMAN SECURITY RAPID STUDY FINDINGS

Unless otherwise stated, the findings presented in this section are based on the primary research conducted in the Bila Tserkva hromada in Kyiv Oblast, Chernihiv and Pryluky hromadas in Chernihiv Oblast, Poltava and Kremenchuk hromadas in Poltava Oblast. The findings are supplemented with information from the document review. The information has been analysed from the perspectives of different dimensions of human security: personal, community and political securities. Please also note that the findings reflect inputs from participants in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews and are therefore indicative, and not generalisable.

### 2.1 Personal security

#### Physical and Mental Trauma

Between 24 February 2022 and 7 May 2023, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) verified 8,701 civilian deaths and 14,815 civilian injuries although the actual figures may be considerably higher.<sup>28</sup> The war has caused significant physical injuries to military personnel and civilians, affecting the lives of those injured and their families. By April 2023, about 10,000 Ukrainians had undergone amputations.<sup>29</sup> Living with a disability can further the emotional trauma of the injured as they face practical challenges in their daily lives. It could also create an additional financial burden for the injured and their families, as the disability may reduce income-generating capacity of the injured.

All participants in this study stressed the impact that the war has had on their mental health, whether they're from the host, displaced or returnee populations. They reported that they have increased anxiety, difficulty in concentrating, including for children and students in education, difficulty in planning for the future or tackling daily tasks effectively and chronic fatigue. They also reported that they felt irritated and lost their tempers more easily than before the war.<sup>30</sup> Family and friends worry about each other; many have families and relatives fighting on the front line and have lost someone close due to the war. These

deaths have immediate and long-term psychological, social, and economic impacts. Moreover, fears and anxieties are intensified by forced displacement, deployment to the military or other war-related duties that have separated family and friends and disrupted social networks that provide comfort and support in times of crises. The increased uncertainty, difficulty in future planning and the feeling of loss of control all contribute to stress.

The war has also affected personal finances, creating additional worries. Forced displacement and destruction of infrastructure have created unemployment, exhausted savings and reduced funds for social protection and services. Twelve months after the start of the war, 17.6 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>31</sup> In 2022, unemployment among those remaining in Ukraine was estimated to be 25 per cent, but the number be higher if job losses among those displaced abroad were included.<sup>32</sup> IDPs accounted for a significant proportion of the unemployed.<sup>33</sup> In January 2023, 75 per cent of IDPs were in receipt of cash assistance.<sup>34</sup> Since the full-scale invasion in 2022, inflation has risen to over 20 per cent and raw food prices have increased by over 40 per cent.<sup>35</sup> The majority of Ukrainians are reporting that they have reduced food consumption and depleted their savings.<sup>36</sup> If the war continues, 90 per cent of the population could be in poverty or vulnerable to poverty, and 18 years of socioeconomic progress in Ukraine would be lost.<sup>37</sup>

Psychosocial stressors and traumatic events may exacerbate or trigger chronic physical health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that over 10 million people in Ukraine are 'at risk of acute stress, anxiety, depression, substance use and post-traumatic stress disorder.'<sup>38</sup> Participants in the study also believe that suicide rates have increased and that sometimes people have turned to alcohol or drugs to cope with stress. A community security working group (CSWG) meeting in

28 OHCHR, 2023a

29 Cookman, 2023

30 The information provided in the FGDs is consistent with IOM findings in 2022 see IOM, 2022d

31 OCHA, 2023: 6

32 ILO, 2022: 5 CHECK

33 KSE Institute & IOM, 2023: 2

34 IOM, 2023b: 7

35 OCHA, 2023: 14

36 OCHA, 2023: 7

37 ILO, 2022: 4

38 OCHA, 2023: 14

Chernihiv noted an increase in suicide rates, the majority of whom are veterans.<sup>39</sup> Although participants acknowledged that there is an increased awareness of mental health problems, there is still a stigma attached to mental health issues and a reluctance to seek counselling or professional help. There is also a lack of suitably qualified counsellors and psychologists who have the expertise to address the mental health problems arising from the war. Forced displacement has reduced the number of psychologists in Ukraine and left some areas without any psychologists, particularly rural and less densely populated areas.

Some individuals cope better than others. Focus group discussion participants felt that those who work and are able to earn an income are more mentally resilient than the unemployed, and those with hobbies and strong social connections also cope better with stress. Displacement is likely to worsen any pre-existing vulnerabilities and means that displaced populations with multiple vulnerabilities are likely to be more vulnerable than host populations with similar vulnerabilities. In addition, increased mental distress can impact social cohesion, for instance, when grieving conflict-affected communities come into contact with Russian-speaking IDPs. On such occasions, language could be a potential trigger of tension between the host and displaced populations. Overall, there is an added value to explore the link between mental health and social cohesion to better understand how different drivers can overlap and mutually reinforce each other.

## Explosive Ordnance and Firearms

Ukraine is contaminated with explosive ordnance, including cluster munitions, anti-personnel, and anti-vehicle mines from the conflict in 2014 and 2015, from the current war with Russia as well as from the First and Second World Wars.<sup>40</sup> The contamination poses a threat to the lives of civilians and impedes humanitarian activities, freedom of movement and livelihoods. The agricultural sector is particularly affected, as fields are littered with explosive ordnance from the war. Those desperate to generate income or to forage for food take risks and enter areas known to be contaminated with explosive ordnance. Among those vulnerable to explosive ordnance are the displaced and the returnees because they are travelling through and settling in areas that are unfamiliar with limited knowledge of explosive ordnance in local areas.

At a CSWG meeting on 10 May 2023, the State Emergency Service (SES) reported that it had detected 135 explosive devices in the city of Chernihiv since the beginning of the year.<sup>41</sup> By July 2023, there had been no systematic assessments of the extent of the contamination, but the scale is believed to be very large.<sup>42</sup> It is estimated that almost 11 million people in Ukraine are in need of mine action interventions to reduce the threat of explosive ordnance contamination through risk education, marking and clearance of hazardous areas and victim assistance, either directly or through establishing referral pathways.<sup>43</sup>

A widespread ownership of firearms and explosives poses a threat to the Ukrainian society. According to a recent report, between 7 and 9 million weapons were held legally and another 7 million were circulating illegally in Ukraine.<sup>44</sup> The country's firearms laws are weak compared with other European countries and the 2014 war in Crimea had already precipitated access to firearms and their diversion to organized crime. Moreover, the current war has further increased sources of weapons. In response to the 2022 invasion, the GoU distributed arms to anyone declaring a willingness to defend the country.<sup>45</sup> Deserters often leave with their firearms and civilians collect abandoned weapons, mainly from Russian, but also from Ukrainian forces. Some weapons are passed onto the government, others are retained for personal protection and some for criminal activities. Criminal gangs are reported to be exploiting the war to train fighters, acquire weapons and establish their own combat groups.<sup>46</sup> One focus group reported that a man took a grenade to his home to commit suicide and several FGDs noted weapons' proliferation among the civilian population and expressed concern that people are resorting to firearms to settle personal disputes. These views are consistent with a 2023 report.

## Shifting Dynamics between Men and Women

FGD participants reported that the ongoing war has changed the dynamics between men and women rapidly, as couples are separated and often face very different

39 Email communication, Hanna Kukhareno, 15 May 2023

40 Mine Action Review, 2022a; 2022b

41 Email communication, Hanna Kukhareno, 15 May 2023

42 HALO Trust, 2023; NPA, 2023

43 OCHA, 2023: 93

44 Galeotti and Arutunyan, 2023: 5

45 Galeotti and Arutunyan, 2023

46 Galeotti and Arutunyan, 2023

yet stressful situations. Masculinity is increasingly being associated with the military, and for a man to fulfil his role, there is a perception that he must be a soldier. These views and conscription are affecting gender dynamics and contributing to household tensions.<sup>47</sup> The physical separation between spouses and inability or unwillingness to discuss the stress they face, either because they cannot articulate their experiences or do not wish to burden the other, is undermining relationships and leading to an increase in the number of divorces.

Women have assumed greater caring and domestic responsibilities while often having a reduced income.<sup>48</sup> Forced displacement and military service have often left women solely responsible for the children, household, finances, and decision-making. They are dealing with the banks, state bureaucracy, access to services and assistance in addition to domestic and professional responsibilities. Those who do not work and relied on husbands for the household budget have limited finances and may be seeking employment. Online learning and lack of kindergartens, either because they are closed or being used to house IDPs, have led to limited childcare options, therefore restricting women's ability work.

In some households, women are assuming a greater responsibility of financially supporting the households because men are reluctant to seek formal employment lest they be conscripted. Displaced men can be reluctant to register at the military registration office, which limits their access to assistance and employment, contributing to the development of a shadow economy.<sup>49</sup> Men are relying more heavily on financial support of other members of the households, including their female partners, which is creating tensions at the household level, as this challenges the notion of masculine ideals where the man is the breadwinner.

In addition, the ongoing war has led to an increase in gender-based violence (GBV). The increase was anticipated, as the war in 2014 also led to an increase in GBV. Most GBV are against women, but it is known that some men experience GBV as well, although they are less likely than women to report it. During the research, a key informant observed that women are increasingly talking about GBV publicly and demanding action. The informant argued that it is believed that the 2014-2015 conflict and the current war have precipitated changes because many women have been displaced, often without their male relatives, and

have received financial support as IDPs. Consequently, they have some economic independence and can see potential opportunities to live independently and work to support themselves away from their abuser. In addition, from 2014 and 2015, internationally supported interventions to address GBV in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have raised awareness on GVB. The women forcibly displaced from these areas have taken this knowledge with them and are now seeking support in other parts of Ukraine.

There was disagreement among FGDs about whether the war had empowered women and highlighted their resilience or increased their vulnerabilities. Some felt that the war had 'deepened gender stereotypes that emphasise the perceived role of men as protectors, fighters, and heroes and women as caring supporters,'<sup>50</sup> others believed that women had become more independent and assumed more responsibilities for the family, including income generation, in the absence of their husbands and other male relatives. Some viewed these changes as an increased burden on women's lives rather than a process of empowerment that demonstrates women's resilience. Although the war may have provided opportunities for women in abusive relationships to leave, they require additional support to become fully independent. Globally, the Gender Inequality Index ranks Ukraine as 66 out of 146, up from 81 in 2022 but down from 59 in 2020. For economic participation and opportunity, and political empowerment, Ukraine has increased from 62 in 2022 to 55 in 2023 and from 100 in 2022 to 87 in 2023 respectively, which may suggest that the war has led to an increase in women's roles outside their homes.<sup>51</sup>

## Lost Childhood and Education

The war and displacement have disrupted childhood and education, increased children's protection risks and negatively affected their mental health.<sup>52</sup> The views expressed during the FGDs are consistent with the findings of a study conducted a year after the invasion.<sup>53</sup> The FGD participants have mentioned that children had to mature quickly, have witnessed violence, destruction, and death and many have lost their close relatives. Children's mental health has been affected and they are experiencing panic attacks. FGD participants particularly noted the stress

47 Written communication, Alicia Elaine Luedke, 8 August 2023

48 UN Women and Care International, 2022: 7-8

49 ILO, 2022 and observations of study participants

50 UN Women, 2023

51 World Economic Forum, 2020, 2022, 2023

52 OCHA, 2023: 14; UN, 2023; USAID, IOM, IS: 2022

53 Cedos, 2023

that air raid sirens cause on children. Teachers are also experiencing mental health problems due to the violence of the war, the trauma experienced by the children they are teaching and their increased workload.

The lack of bomb shelters close to educational facilities forced most of the classes to be held online. Consequently, students are often isolated and lack opportunities to develop social skills. Large-scale displacement has led many children and students to be separated from their friends, and they are now in an unfamiliar environment with difficulties in establishing new friendships. The impact is particularly severe for many young people who have already experienced disruption to their education and restrictions on social interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been limited research in Ukraine about the impact of school closures and the shift to online classes during the pandemic, but studies from other countries suggest that children's educational achievements have suffered during the period.<sup>54</sup> Focus groups noted that younger IDP children who are currently able to attend school, rather than studying online, are better socialized than older children who study at home.

Education has been further disrupted by the lack of teachers, many of whom have left Ukraine or rural areas. Therefore, those that remain have become responsible for larger numbers of children than normal. Class sizes have further increased for some teachers, as the large-scale displacement has inflated the school-age population in some areas. Some parents who have taken their children abroad have registered their children for school in Ukraine because they want them to retain their connection to the country. This is also adding to the workload for some teachers who are running additional online classes for children who are abroad.<sup>55</sup>

Outbreaks of fighting, air raid sirens and power outages have disrupted face-to-face and online teaching. There has been no systematic research to date to calculate the number of educational days lost due to the war, but some parents from the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine believe it to be greater than 30 days.<sup>56</sup> There are concerns that online learning is increasing inequalities in education, as poorer households are unable to afford necessary equipment and internet access for their children's education.<sup>57</sup>

School buildings, educational resources, and facilities such as school buses have been destroyed. Throughout the country, it has been calculated that around 11 per cent of educational facilities have been damaged although the level of destruction varies according to location. In Chernihiv Oblast, for example, 41 per cent of schools were damaged including three that were destroyed. The destruction was worse in the city of Chernihiv, which is included in this study, where 80 per cent of school buildings were damaged.<sup>58</sup>

Study participants have also observed that decreases in household incomes because of unemployment, displacement and the depletion of financial resources have led to an increase in child labour. Older teenagers are not finishing their education or dropping out of university to work. Some have claimed that teenage girls were engaged in sex work to earn money.

FGD participants have noted that children and youths are showing signs of resilience as well. They have become more aware of the needs of others and how they have been affected by the war and, as a result, are engaging in voluntary and community activities to support others.

## Veterans

The Government of Ukraine (GoU) estimates that, by the end of the war, the number of veterans, their family members and families of the fallen could be between five and eight million.<sup>59</sup> Veterans from the war between 2014 and 2021 reported that there was a lack of support from the authorities to reintegrate them into civilian life. Some of them have been remobilized since the start of the full invasion. Seventy five per cent of veterans surveyed believed that the veterans needed psychosocial support after completing their military service. They also required more support to access health services, including prosthetic limbs. Although unemployment among veterans is low, veterans tend to have irregular employment and felt unsuited or not educated enough for civilian jobs. Over a third of veterans expressed an interest in starting their own businesses but lack relevant skills and struggle to access appropriate support. Some veterans have reported improvements in their relationships with their families when returning from the war, while others have reported that their family relationships have deteriorated.<sup>60</sup> Both veterans and their

54 Cedoss, 2023: 15

55 Cedoss, 2023: 79

56 Cedoss, 2023: 78

57 Cedoss, 2023: 46

58 Cedoss, 2023: 20

59 IOM, 2022a: 1

60 IOM and MoVAoU, 2022

families need support with the reintegration process, as both have been affected by their experiences during the war. A veteran may not return as the same person that he or she was before the war, and their families may also have changed in their absence. When the war ends, the number of returning veterans and their reintegration needs will be significant. Some veterans are using alcohol and drugs to cope with stress and trauma, while some may become violent towards their families. The situation could worsen if a veteran becomes unsuccessful in regaining employment, as this could make them feel like they are failing to fulfil their traditional roles. Some veterans report that life as a soldier was easier because while fighting, there was a chain of command, orders to follow and set procedures. On the other hand, family life is often less structured and requires different types of decision-making skills than in the military.

One of the key informants during the interviews noted that there is a need to support and empower veterans to address their practical everyday problems as well as psychosocial issues. For example, they might need medical support to improve their physical health and rehabilitation and assistive devices such as prosthetic limbs to improve their mobility. They may also need assistance in obtaining appropriate documents to access financial support. In addition to the impact of the war on veterans, there were anecdotal reports the study participants that there is an increasing number of soldiers deserting because of the mental health problems. They would also require appropriate support to recover and reintegrate into civilian life.

## Human Trafficking

According to key informants consulted for this study, the rates of human trafficking decreased in 2022 because traffickers were also affected by the conflict. However, between February and December 2022, almost 70 per cent of calls to a hotline providing advice on safe migration included discussions on human trafficking. Twenty-three callers were identified as victims of trafficking and were referred for further assistance.<sup>61</sup> On average, there are around 1,000 victims of human trafficking annually in Ukraine. Given the different perceptions, there is a need for more research on this topic, while also highlighting a potential lack of awareness on issues related to human trafficking. For instance, when the focus group discussion participants were asked about human trafficking, they did

not regard human trafficking as a threat to their personal safety. This is consistent with a survey conducted in October 2022 which found that over 85 per cent of respondents believed that their personnel risk of being a victim of trafficking was non-existent or very unlikely. Despite these views, the survey identified various behaviours that expose people to the risk of being trafficked and concluded that all population groups were potentially vulnerable to trafficking. The survey also concluded that, since the start of the war, the prevalence of risky behaviours has increased because people are more willing to consider potentially risky opportunities to travel and work abroad.<sup>62</sup>

## 2.2 Community Security

This section summarizes the views of study participants about the tensions that have arisen between different populations groups and the discrimination experienced by certain demographic and socioeconomic groups because of the war or that have been intensified by the war. The main concerns of the study participants were tensions between host and displaced populations, and the vulnerabilities of the older persons and PLWD that have been exacerbated by displacement. Focus group discussion participants were also asked about LGBTQ and Roma populations. No participants had any comments on people identifying as LGBTQ and had very little to say about the Roma population. Both groups are considered marginalized in Ukraine, and both were identified as disproportionately impacted by the war in study by UN Women and Care International in 2022.<sup>63</sup> The lack of knowledge about these groups among focus group discussion participants is an indication of their marginalization. No Roma people were included in the study because consultations with them were not possible within the time available. Furthermore, it is unknown whether any study participants identify as LGBTQ and no relevant representative organizations could be included in the study within the time available.

## Marginalized Groups

There is no specific protection of rights for individuals identifying as LGBTQ, which limits their means to fight against discrimination.<sup>64</sup> Displaced LGBTQ individuals

61 IOM, 2022e

62 USAID, IOM and IS, 2022

63 UN Women and Care International, 2022

64 Henrich Böll Stiftung, 2021



have reported discrimination when trying to secure accommodation. Some medications, such as hormone therapy for transgender people, can be difficult to find. Access to social services and psychosocial support has also become more limited for LGBTQ groups, as these services are also responding to the needs of large sections of the population impacted by the war.<sup>65</sup>

Despite the discrimination, a study conducted in 2022 suggests that LGBTQ individuals are more concerned about surviving the war than the discrimination they face in Ukraine.<sup>66</sup> There are also reports that the war is changing attitudes towards LGBTQ groups in Ukraine. A number of openly gay soldiers on the front line feel that their contribution to the war is being acknowledged and, therefore, their sexuality is less important. At the same time, same-sex relationships have become more acceptable and the issues around legally recognizing same-sex partnerships have been highlighted. A draft civil union law has been brought before the Ukrainian Parliament. A change in the law would allow same-sex couples to make medical decisions on behalf of their partner, arrange their funeral and access state support. Currently, same-sex couples do not legally have these rights.<sup>67</sup>

Few participants mentioned the Roma and those who complained about their unwillingness to work. The Roma are considered to be one of the most vulnerable groups in Ukraine. Many lack identity documents, which limits their access to services, formal employment opportunities and ability to register businesses.<sup>68</sup> Study participants noted that Roma who have been displaced and lack legal identity documents face difficulties in accessing support for IDPs. These views are consistent with a 2022 study, which notes that lack of civil documentation prevents the Roma from accessing services and limits their mobility inside Ukraine and internationally. This creates additional problems for Roma trying to flee the fighting and cross internal checkpoints as well as international borders. Internally displaced Roma mothers have reported difficulty in placing their children in kindergartens and schools. Although Roma boys often have secondary education and some go to universities, Roma girls are often poorly educated, and their loss of education as a result of discrimination increases education inequalities. Both Roma men and women report difficulty

in accessing humanitarian assistance because they do not understand the written information they have received.<sup>69</sup>

## Forced Migration and Population Dynamics

The war has caused large-scale forced migration that has changed the population dynamics and created different populations of host, IDPs and returnees. In the case study locations, tensions have emerged between these different groups, which undermine social cohesion and create additional psychosocial stressors for individuals who may already be struggling to cope with stress. The mental health problems experienced by individuals may increase suspicion of strangers, which further weakens social cohesion.

While recent IOM reports indicate that 89 per cent of non-displaced individuals interviewed as part of IOM's General Population Survey expressed a positive outlook towards new arrivals from other regions,<sup>70</sup> this study found cases in which, overtime, some of these relationships have soured. During the focus group discussions, some members of the host population argued that they have stayed, worked, and paid their taxes yet receive little recognition from the government or aid organizations. They have welcomed IDPs and used their own resources to support them and now their savings are depleted while IDPs have been prioritized for social services, housing, and places for their children in schools and kindergartens over members of the host population. The host population also questions why their relatives are fighting and dying on the frontline while the men who have left the areas under attack are seeking safety as IDPs elsewhere. Among some of the host population in the areas assessed, there exists a misconception or fear that IDPs who speak Russian or come from the occupied areas might be collaborators. IDPs, particularly Russian-speaking IDPs, report difficulty in finding jobs or renting accommodation because of the distrust. Tensions between Russian and Ukrainian speakers have existed before the 2022 invasion and have seen an exacerbation since the war. Additionally, according to IOM Ukraine's Returns Report, returnees, as a group, demonstrates the highest level (26 per cent of the surveyed) of perceived tension concerning government-provided social assistance., including cash assistance.<sup>71</sup>

65 UN Women and Care International, 2022

66 UN Women and Care International, 2022

67 Nanu, 2023

68 Henrich Böll Stiftung, 2021

69 UN Women and Care International, 2022

70 Ukraine Internal Displacement Report: General Population Survey, IOM, June 2023

71 Ukraine Returns Report, General Population Survey, Round 13, IOM, June 2023.

In some instances, IDPs interviewed report feeling unwelcome and struggling to cope with a lower standard of living than they had before being displaced. They have reported instances where taxi drivers have refused to transport them because they receive financial support that is not available to the host population. Other examples mentioned involve reluctance from some employers – to employ IDPs because they do not want to invest time and resources into a person who they expect will leave in a short time. However, some potential host employees interviewed complained that employers prioritize recruitment of IDPs to receive government subsidies.

It is important to note that experiences vary among individuals and from one location to another. A participant in one of the focus group discussions acknowledged her status as an IDP and reported that she has accepted her displacement and is settled in her new location. Conversely, some IDPs are thought to be deliberately avoiding interacting with the host population, as they consider their situation temporary and are looking to find ways to return home. In Chernihiv, where traditionally there is a large proportion of Russian speakers, IDPs seemed to be better integrated than in some of the other study locations, and the use of the Russian language does not present the same barriers in daily life as elsewhere. It was noted that Chernihiv has been hosting IDPs since 2014, therefore there was time for a positive IDP-host relationship to develop. It should also be noted that the impact of the presence of the IDPs in Chernihiv is lower than elsewhere, as the IDPs to host population ratio in the Chernihiv is lower than other study locations. For instance, due to a smaller proportion of IDPs in Chernihiv, there was less competition for access to services than in other study locations and both the IDP and host population considered their access to services was adequate.

On the other hand, Bila Tserkva, for example, is located away from the front line and from the traditionally Russian speaking areas. It has also been less directly affected by the war, unlike nearby areas of Kyiv, which has been systematically bombed. Bila Tserkva has become a host area to a large population of IDPs who originate from an area of Ukraine where they previously had little contact. At the same time, the original population has been depleted as residents have travelled abroad. Some residents of Bila Tserkva interviewed expressed that they feel like their traditions are under a threat. There has been a much larger and more rapid change in the population dynamics in Bila Tserkva than in Chernihiv, which has at times resulted in tensions between the host and displaced populations.

There were also reports of divisions among IDPs. Those displaced in 2014 have at times expressed resentment at the comparative ease of the newly displaced's access to assistance. This is creating divisions between people who originate from the same geographical region. However, it has also been noted that those who have been displaced for a longer period of time – up to seven or eight years – are better able to cope and access assistance than the newly displaced. For instance, men and women from among the protracted IDP populations are beginning to participate in local-level decision-making.<sup>72</sup> In addition, some IDPs initially hosted in Collective Centres that were established to host displaced populations, have since been able to make alternative living arrangements in neighbouring communities or elsewhere.

The study found that the term “returnees” is often subject to how an individual identifies. For instance, it was difficult to identify returnees within the study, as some study participants may have not identified themselves as returnees if only displaced for a short period of time as well due to the potential stigma attached to being a returnee. The few self-identified returnees who participated in the study noted difficulty in reintegrating after they returned from abroad because they lacked shared experiences with those who remained. More specifically, those who went to Europe sometimes experienced a relatively better standard of living and, after returning, are finding the conditions in Ukraine difficult. In another instance, some of those who stayed in Ukraine have been reported to criticize those who left for their lack of solidarity or expressed suspicion towards those who remained during the occupation, or more generally the Russian-speaking populations, to be collaborators of Russia. In some cases, individuals return home only temporarily from elsewhere in Ukraine or from abroad to check up on relatives, and business interests or to fulfil administrative and legal requirements, which could add to frustrations around the perceived lack of solidarity among returnees.

### **Older Persons and Persons Living with Disabilities**

Older persons and persons living with disabilities (PLWD) have been significantly affected by the war and forced displacement. Many participants in this study believed that these groups were among the most vulnerable before the war and that their situation had deteriorated significantly

72 UN Women and Care International, 2022

during the war, as they had become increasingly isolated. Many, particularly widows, are in isolated rural areas as the rest of the family has left – some to safer urban areas away from the frontline, some to look for work and some have left the country. Older persons in urban areas lack daily support as family members have left. They face particular difficulties in accessing support or pensions through online systems because they do not understand them or lack the devices to access online support.<sup>73</sup> The value of pensions in real terms has decreased because of inflation, thereby pushing many older persons into poverty.

There were no accurate statistics about the number of PLWD before the war although government figures suggested that around 6 per cent of the population or 2.7 million people in Ukraine have disabilities.<sup>74</sup> Given the level of injuries sustained by civilians and the military due to the war, it is known that the number of PLWD will rise. Study participants with disabilities who are working to support and advocate for disability rights reported discrimination against PLWD in Ukraine. They explained that there is a lack of understanding of their needs and that they experience isolation and discrimination, have difficulty securing employment, accessing public transport and buildings, and participating in social activities.<sup>75</sup>

PLWD are often reliant on family members for support. PLWD who have become displaced are more dependent in an unfamiliar environment and may have been separated from family members and their usual support network. In the advent of an air raid, PLWD often struggle to get to a place of safety. Some of those who have been displaced have been allocated accommodation in multi-storey buildings, thereby unable to go outside easily. Interviewed PLWD reported that some people were hostile towards them when they received humanitarian support because there was competition for assistance and there was a perception that the support was not distributed fairly.

### 2.3 Political Security

Access to services, social protection, legal identification, protection, and human rights are the focus of political security. They are relevant to post-war recovery and were the issues of highest concern to those who participated in the study.

73 OCHA, 2023: 14

74 UN Women and Care International, 2022 citing data from State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2021

75 Email communication, Oleksandr Obiedkov, 15 May 2023

The imposition of martial law in response to the Russian invasion has led to the suspension of certain human rights, such as the right of men of fighting age to leave the country, delays in discussing human rights reforms such as same-sex marriage, the introduction of restrictions on workers' rights, and the suspension of scheduled elections and centralized control in Kyiv, limiting the access to resources and autonomy of subnational governance structures.<sup>76</sup>

### Social Services

All public services including education, physical and mental health, housing, and social services have all been negatively affected by the war. Infrastructure has been damaged, and professionals have been displaced or have left the country. The impact of the war has resulted in larger numbers of people accessing services than before, therefore increasing the pressure on services in areas hosting displaced populations.

Real or perceived unequal distribution of services is creating tension among different population groups. There are accusations of corruption and lack of accountability from government bodies, international organizations and NGOs regarding their transparency about how assistance is distributed, and how recipients are prioritized, particularly as some IDPs could access the support before members of the host population who have been on waiting lists for a long time. Centralization of government capacity and the channelling of foreign assistance through Kyiv has reduced access to resources and the autonomy of subnational governments, therefore creating tensions between the different government levels.<sup>77</sup>

Key informants reported that assistance across the country and sectors is unequal and comes from multiple sources, including traditional stakeholders, private enterprises, and the diaspora, only some of which are channelled through the government. Therefore, mapping and coordinating assistance and ensuring that it is effectively distributed is a challenge. Coordination mechanisms among government bodies and international and national humanitarian and development organizations vary. Failures in collaboration between government bodies and the humanitarian and development sectors are partly due to poor communication. When there was poor coordination, it caused frustration among the local population. Such frustration could undermine the social contract.

76 Amnesty International, 2023

77 Freedom House, 2022

It was noted by the focus group discussion participants that many local organizations have been created in response to or have become more prominent because of the war. These organizations have a good understanding of the local context and access to the local populations as well as demonstrate innovation and commitment. In some instances, there was frustration that external interventions have not been supporting capacity development and have not built upon the work of these grassroots organizations for the benefit of the population and long-term recovery.

Assistance across the different affected areas is unequal. Some areas receive more attention than others. Assistance is difficult to map and manage, as it comes from multiple sources, including international organizations as well as assistance from private enterprises and the diaspora. Across all case study locations, there is a generally held view that local governments could be doing more to support the people. During the FGD in Poltava, the coalition government was particularly criticised for its inadequate response to meeting the needs of the host and IDP populations.

### **Social Protection and Legal Identity**

During wars, important legal documents are often lost, which increases the risk of statelessness and affects freedom of movement, access to services, humanitarian assistance, and social protection. The Roma and other ethnic minorities and those arriving from areas outside the control of the Government of Ukraine (GoU), in particular, lack legal documentation.<sup>78</sup>

Many state-provided services and social protection payments are managed through Diia – Ukraine’s E-government system. IDPs, in particular, have responded positively to this system because it facilitated access to services despite some of them lacking various identity documents. However, IDPs who have lost their employment records have difficulty accessing their pensions because digital records exist only from 2004. Some study participants noted that Diia does not always work and was difficult for older persons or those without smartphones to access it. Children and students who have been unable to access their school and university certificates to show their previous educational achievements may face difficulty accessing further education or the job market. IDPs’ lack of access to their medical records that are not digitalized has delayed ongoing treatment or delivery of childhood vaccinations. Some men are reluctant to register with the

authorities because they do not want to be drafted into the military. Additionally, there were reports of difficulties in obtaining identity documents for children whose parents are not with them. Some participants in the focus group discussions also criticized the complex bureaucracy and the lack of sensitivity of some of the bureaucrats.

Documentation problems, particularly associated with people from the occupied areas of Ukraine, include the lack of death certificates, which delays inheritance, and birth certificates, which can lead to statelessness and associated problems with accessing services and exercising certain rights. To claim compensation for the loss of or damage to property, people also need documents proving their ownership, which is another problem for people in the occupied areas. In some instances, legal documents in the occupied areas are written in Russian, or students have degree certificates in Russian from universities in the Russian Federation. It can be difficult to get these officially translated so that they are accepted as legal documents.

Military service has conferred certain rights and social protection on veterans and their families, including access to medical treatment, transport, housing, and financial support. However, this is not always well understood by officials or sometimes the resources are not available. Veterans also need a certificate to show their participation in the war before they can access support. The procedure is long and complicated – there are reports that some veterans have been waiting over 18 months for their certificates. The situation is further complicated because some of the former veterans who were serving from 2014 to 2021 have been remobilized. Consequently, delays in issuing certificates were the main complaint among focus group discussion participants related to veterans. These delays are problematic for veterans who have become disabled while serving in the military, as they are more dependent on financial support than those who are able to work.

Many of the most vulnerable groups and those with multiple vulnerabilities are reliant on social protection and humanitarian assistance. In addition, the duration for payments of unemployment benefits, including for IDPs, has been reduced. It was noted that the unemployment benefit is low, and many people do not apply for it. However, there was also a concern that some working-age adults might choose to leave the country to look for work rather than remain in Ukraine. People living with disabilities or those caring for them have reported difficulty in claiming benefits, particularly among those who have been displaced because it is unclear what support they are entitled to access.

78 OCHA, 2023

## Protection and Human Rights

This section provides an overview of the international humanitarian laws and human rights legislation relevant to the threats to human security identified in this study. Democratic reforms in Ukraine have been slow, and few people are aware of their human rights.<sup>79</sup> This is consistent with the findings from the primary research of this study. With the exception of individuals involved in activism or working for organizations supporting individuals to access their rights, rights were articulated in terms of material needs rather than legal, protected rights. Focus group discussion participants noted the lack of legal aid from the state, which was poor before the war and has deteriorated since the start of the war.

### *Human Rights*

A 2021 report concluded that ongoing threats from Russia have resulted in public policy prioritizing national security over measures to improve the protection of human rights. The National Strategy for Human Rights, passed by the Presidential Decree in 2021, is intended to strengthen legislation to protect freedom of speech and freedom of peaceful assembly and to increase protection against discrimination. However, the implementation of human rights legislation has been weak, and freedom of expression has been restricted.<sup>80</sup> Despite being a signatory to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, OHCHR believes that restrictions on the rights of minority groups and the use of minority languages may violate the convention.<sup>81</sup>

OHCHR has recorded cases of forced disappearance and arbitrary detentions primarily for suspected collaboration. Ukraine's laws on collaboration do not appear to comply with international human rights law and international humanitarian law.<sup>82</sup> Focus group discussion participants noted that Russian speakers and Ukrainians from the East and occupied areas of the country feared being accused of collaboration although there were no reports of disappearance or detention.

Ukraine has adopted most international and regional conventions promoting women's rights and empowerment, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and has

enshrined these into national law and policies.<sup>83</sup> Despite the efforts, the war has brought about some changes for women in public life. Their active participation in civil society is raising their profile at the local level, increasing their involvement in informal decision-making processes. At the national level, women in politics have a high profile, with many assuming prominent positions in the government and undertaking international diplomacy, as travel for men outside the country is restricted.<sup>84</sup>

## Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Focus group discussion participants believe that the incidents of GBV have increased because of the war while access to services has decreased. There is a lack of women's shelters and access to psychosocial and legal support. A key informant claimed that the police are not responding to all calls related to GBV. These views are confirmed by reports from OHCHR, UN Women and Care International.<sup>85</sup> In addition to GBV, there are also incidents of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) recorded against men as well as women.<sup>86</sup> Legal responses to GBV and CRSV have been criticised for not being victim-centred.<sup>87</sup> There is a need to train law enforcement, the judiciary and medical professionals on how to support victims of sexual violence.

Women in abusive relationships need practical help such as cash assistance and training for paid employment so that they have the financial capacity to leave and support their children. If women want to access the justice system to get a divorce or claim alimony, they need their husband's passport details, which, in many instances, they do not have. A key informant noted that due to increased international support, the Donetsk and Lugansk regions provided better access to justice and social services to address GBV issues than in many other parts of the country. However, with the full-scale invasion, it is believed that much of this capacity has been scattered although there had been effective interventions to raise awareness on GBV prior to the full-scale invasion.

79 Henrich Böll Stiftung and KIs to this study

80 Henrich Böll Stiftung, 2021: 12-13; OHCHR, 2023: 36

81 OHCHR, 2023: 31-32

82 OHCHR, 2023: 26-27 and 35

83 UN Women, 2023

84 UN women and Care International, 2022

85 OHCHR, 2023; UN women and Care International, 2022

86 OHCHR, 2023: 27-28; UN women and Care International, 2022: 38-39

87 OHCHR, 2023: 27-28; UN women and Care International, 2022: 38-39

## Disability Rights

Disability rights are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Ukraine is a state party, and mainstreamed through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as well as through the Geneva Conventions to protect PLWD during the conflict. This means, for example, that PLWD should have access to bomb shelters. OHCHR has expressed concern that state parties, including Ukraine and countries receiving Ukrainians who have disabilities, are not fulfilling their commitments to these conventions.<sup>88</sup>

In Ukraine, state support for PLWD is reportedly inadequate and many rely on support from NGOs. For instance, there is a lack of specialists such as sign language interpreters. The stigma of disability means that PLWD have at times been placed in social institutions and that those who want to work are at times discriminated against by employers. Activists for disability rights believe that political leaders lack understanding of the rights of PLWD and of the challenges they face in daily life. The legal rights of persons with disabilities need to be promoted and awareness raised to reduce the discrimination PLWD face in daily life. Participants of the study who have disabilities or work in organizations promoting disability rights fear that progress made before the war in promoting disability has been lost.

## Mine Action

Ukraine is a state party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention but not to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.<sup>89</sup> There is national and international mine action capacity but a lack of systematic coordination and a clear governance structure. Not all policies and procedures required by International Mine Action Standards are in place. For example, there are international guidelines for gender in mine action, but these have not been mainstreamed through the Ukrainian national mine action strategy.<sup>90</sup> The extent of the explosive ordnance contamination in Ukraine is unknown, but it will take decades to clear contaminated areas. Although Ukraine does not have a clear gender and mine action policy, women are employed in the mine action sector in all managerial and operation roles including as deminers. Recruiting women as deminers is becoming more common as fewer men are available due to the mobilization.

Mine action is regarded as a facilitator of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>91</sup> The long-term post-war recovery of Ukraine requires effective mine action. Without it, there will be ongoing fear of contamination or suspected contamination and accidents resulting in loss of life and injuries, destruction of property and reduced mobility and access to amenities, natural resources, and livelihood assets. The mine action sector also has capacity in the management of firearms.

## 3. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This rapid study provides an overview of the main impacts of the war on the personal, community and political dimensions of human security in five hromadas – Bila Tserkva, Chernihiv, Pryluky, Poltava and Kremenchuk. The study has identified findings that deserve more detailed analysis as they have the potential to inform IOM interventions. Further research is needed to:

- Capture the contextual differences between the locations and provide more nuanced insights, particularly into the relationships between host-displaced populations;
- Understand the impact of the war in more detail on rural populations as the study included collected insights from predominately urban areas;
- Fill the gaps in understanding the experiences of returnees;
- Capture the views and experiences of men in more detail, as study participants were predominately women and ensure in-depth gender analysis about the impact of the war;
- Understand the issues faced by veterans from the human security perspective and supplement IOM's work to date;

<sup>88</sup> Session on disability rights in Ukraine

<sup>89</sup> Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, 2020

<sup>90</sup> UN, 2019

<sup>91</sup> GICHD and UNDP, 2017

- Learn more about successful local initiatives in Ukraine to determine whether they can be replicated in other locations.

### 3.1 Addressing Multiple Needs Simultaneously

The human security rapid study findings reveal that a holistic response that addresses the root causes of issues is necessary to respond to the various needs of individuals and population groups and to support the national and subnational administrative and political government levels to provide political security. Concepts such as human security, the triple nexus and IOM's 4R Vision all promote integrated, comprehensive approaches to address complex needs. The UN Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) encourages different organizations to work together and to adopt cross-sectoral approaches with the intention that the outcomes are greater than the sum of their parts.<sup>92</sup> Experiences from elsewhere that adopt multi-agency implementation which includes a range of national and international implementing partners to address human security, humanitarian, development and peace needs and help to link the different types of interventions show that it is possible to address multiple needs simultaneously and on a large-scale. For example, in Tanzania, six UN entities adopted a coordinated human security approach to support the country in hosting refugees fleeing conflict in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda and to promote peaceful coexistence among host and refugee populations. The programme succeeded in closing the gap between humanitarian and development assistance.<sup>93</sup>

#### Strengthening Human Security Dynamics

In the Rasht Valley, a remote and underserved part of Tajikistan, the UNHSTF funded programmes to improve agriculture, infrastructure, access to social services and conflict management to promote improved food security, economic development, and security. The local population and government noted the positive impact of this cross-sector intervention in a complex environment and recommended that similar approaches should be adopted in other areas of Tajikistan.<sup>94</sup>

92 UNHSTF, 2021b

93 UNHSTF, 2021b

94 UNHSTF, 2021b

The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) is the international response to the large-scale forced displacement of people from Syria. Multiple national and international stakeholders are working together to address the humanitarian and development needs of refugee and host populations in parallel while promoting governance, rule of law, access to justice and social cohesion.<sup>95</sup>

### 3.2 Personal Security

The main impact of the war on personal security has been an increase in mental health problems for all population groups which have affected all aspects of daily life reducing the ability of individuals to function effectively, including children and students in education, and leading at times to alcohol and substance abuse, stress-induced physical health problems, anger and violence between individuals, marital breakdown and an increase in GBV. The war, whether through forced displacement or deployment on military service, has separated friends and families, undermining social support networks at a time when they are most needed to help individuals to cope. This has exposed vulnerable groups such as older persons and PLWD to greater risks, as they lack their usual support networks. Many veterans have indicated to face mental and physical health problems and challenges to reintegrating into the civilian population.

The violence of war has caused deaths and injuries. The threat of air raids has resulted in many children attending school online rather than in person because of a lack of bomb shelters near the schools. This has led to isolation and impeded the development of social skills. The contamination from landmines and explosive ordnance and weapons proliferation among the civilian populations and organized crime networks will continue to pose a physical threat to the population after the war has ended. Landmine and explosive ordnance contamination will also impede post-war recovery processes and long-term development.<sup>96</sup>

Loss of employment, depletion of savings, inflation and inadequate social protection are creating financial worries which exacerbate mental health problems. It is also leading to negative coping mechanisms, including child labour, students dropping out of university and teenage girls engaging in sex work. Increasing numbers of people

95 3RP, 2023a

96 GICHD and UNDP, 2017

are more exposed to human trafficking because they are willing or compelled to take risks.

The war has shifted the traditional role division between men and women which has added to the responsibilities for women in the absence of men, but also challenged the perceived role of men when unemployed, as they are less able to contribute to the household income or decision-making. Simultaneously, masculinity is increasingly associated with the military and fighting. Tensions between couples have increased, divorce rates have risen and increases in GBV are being reported. In some instances, women are more vulnerable and in general have increased responsibilities, in others, women are seen as becoming more resilient and developing new skills and greater independence. The war has revealed vulnerabilities that have changed gender dynamics and it is important to understand how these interact to provide appropriate assistance. Context-specific research and local knowledge are necessary to provide useful insights into how the impact of gender roles can influence social tensions.

### Understanding Gender Dynamics and Vulnerabilities

In Lebanon, local NGOs note that in response to the country's economic crises, more assistance is focused on women and children than men. They argue that the recent sharp increase in domestic violence and sexual harassment of women in public places is a result of financial stress and lack of employment among men. They believe that if men were offered more livelihoods and psychosocial support, the case of domestic violence and sexual harassment could be reduced.<sup>97</sup>

According to women in South Sudan, female-headed households are often prioritized for joint food security and livelihoods projects intended to meet immediate needs while promoting longer-term self-sufficiency, because they are considered the least likely to be able to provide for themselves and their children. However, they argue that men who have been widowed are also in the position of being the sole breadwinner and carer for their children yet receive little support despite being unable to feed their children.<sup>98</sup>

Despite the ongoing threats to physical and mental health and the increased vulnerabilities of some groups, people indicate not to want purely humanitarian interventions; they are looking to the future and post-war recovery and want assistance that promotes development. Activities that promote positive interaction or understanding that in support of the development of the wider community could strongly contribute to personal security.

### 3.3 Community Security

Forced displacement has brought people from the East of Ukraine, who often speak Russian as their first language, into close contact in large numbers with people living in the West of Ukraine who speak Ukrainian as their first language. This has reportedly exacerbated existing mistrust and social and political tensions, which have been reinforced by perceptions of uneven distribution of assistance, access to support and resources. Tensions between host and displaced populations, which are common in such contexts, are increasing as both sides become frustrated with the situation after the initial welcome from the host to the displaced population. Some returnees have reported difficulty in reintegration and there is a certain level of resentment towards them from those that stayed.

In Ukraine, there needs to be a further analysis of how population movements affect drivers of social cohesion and, in the long-term, how social cohesion can be promoted to create stability for post-war recovery and the reintegration of populations displaced internally and abroad. For example, in Lebanon which hosts the largest refugee population per capita in the world, efforts to promote social cohesion are important. Tensions are monitored through perception surveys, social media analysis and immersion research. Analysis of the findings is used to identify interventions to address the sources of tension and to develop the capacity of the affected populations and government institutions to manage tensions peacefully to protect human rights and to mitigate intercommunal violence.<sup>99</sup>

Similarly, there are growing inequalities as those who were already vulnerable are becoming more vulnerable. For instance, older persons, particularly widows in rural areas, as a direct result of forced displacement, have become more vulnerable and isolated because their families have moved away so they have lost their support network. PLWD faced

<sup>97</sup> Data collected by Association Najdeh, Lebanon, 2019 to mid-2022.

<sup>98</sup> UNDP and WFP, 2023 (forthcoming)

<sup>99</sup> 3RP, 2023b



discrimination in Ukraine before the war. Since the war, their access to services has reduced as there is a greater demand among all the population for support and many have been displaced to an unfamiliar environment. The Roma also faced discrimination before the war and displacement has increased their exposure to discrimination. Their lack of legal documentation and poor understanding of majority languages also impedes their access to assistance.

Relationships between host and displaced populations vary from one area to another. There have been positive community level initiatives which aim to bring people together socially or to provide support. Some IDPs from 2014 and 2015 report that they feel integrated into the host population and there are reports of some actively participating in public life in their new community. Some youths are active in CSOs and women have a higher profile among the local community than in the past as a result of their grass-roots initiatives in response to the war.

There are also reports that war has changed people's priorities and shown issues in a different light which has increased tolerance or raised awareness. For example, some LGBTQ individuals feel that military service on the front line has helped changing attitudes and that the LGBTQ population is now more accepted. Moreover, advocates argue that the war has changed the situations in the country and provided an opportunity to promote women's rights and call for greater support to address GBV. Despite the overall negative impact of the war on social cohesion, some findings from areas covered under this study report the development of positive relationships between host and displaced populations and inclusive community level initiatives to address local needs. Further research may help to identify the reasons for improved social cohesion in some areas to inform interventions to promote social cohesion more successfully in other areas where it is relatively weaker. In addition, there is a need to capitalise on stability gains generated under existing initiatives to replicate positive results and approaches more broadly. Building ties with local NGO's or community initiatives could help leveraging local potential to have a ripple effect on social cohesion at a larger scale.

### 3.4 Political Security

Social cohesion is developed formally through equal access to state provided services, and the pursuit of common governance and legal systems, and informally among children through family and social networks and

schooling.<sup>100</sup> The war in Ukraine has disrupted the formal and informal experiences that help to build and maintain social cohesion. Social cohesion among the people and trust between the people and the government is vital for post-war and post-crisis recovery and long-term stability.<sup>101</sup>

All public services have been negatively affected by the war because of damage to the infrastructure, displacement of professionals and increased demand from a population in need. For instance, there is a significant demand for appropriately trained psychologists, and there are criticisms that services are not equally distributed, and that prioritization is not clear and transparent. As noted, this is feeding into tensions between different population groups as they compete over access to limited resources and services. The government at different levels is criticised for not doing enough to support the population. In some locations there is a lack of effective coordination and management of assistance among the government, international actors, and local level initiatives. Some officials are also accused of being unsympathetic. There are real or perceived inequalities in distributions of services which undermine social cohesion and create or reinforce tensions between different population groups.

#### Local Interventions to Promote Political Security

The Transitional Solutions (TSI) Initiative in Colombia, supported by UNDP, UNHCR and the World Bank (2012-2015) was designed to address large-scale displacement and poor political security. 'Promotion Committees', comprising community representatives and municipal authorities were established to bring the population and authorities closer together. They developed action plans to support livelihoods, provisions of basic services, capacity development of community organizations and the protection of security, integrity, freedom, and dignity. Participants regarded the TSI as a process rather than a finite intervention and continued to operate beyond the lifespan of the initial project. The various platforms were formalized and the voice of communities was raised among authorities, and public and private institutions which helped to mobilize efforts and generate commitments and concrete actions.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Council of Europe, 2004

<sup>101</sup> UNDP, 2020: 17

<sup>102</sup> Econometria, 2016; UNDP et al., 2010

There are mixed experiences of accessing legal identity documentation through the E-government platform Diia. For some IDPs who had lost documentation, Diia proved a useful and efficient system; for others, unfamiliar with online access or without a smartphone, the system has been an obstacle. Difficulties in obtaining other official documents such as examination results and medical records have also caused problems. Some official documents issued in the East of Ukraine or qualifications gained in the Russian Federation are in Russian and are not accepted unless officially translated into Ukrainian which creates additional obstacles for already vulnerable households.

Ukraine has committed to various international human rights and international humanitarian law, frameworks some of which have been adopted into national legislation. However, the implementation of these frameworks such as those supporting the rights of women and PLWD have been impeded by the war. The protection of minorities and freedom of social and political rights have also been overshadowed by national security concerns.

The shift by the international community from support for sustainable development to the provision of humanitarian assistance and basic needs, the provision of services and support to the population by non-government actors in parallel with the public sector, and the introduction of martial law, have led to the suspension of some development initiatives and a potential weakening of the social contract. Such responses to the war may not be always necessary in all parts of Ukraine. There may be opportunities to maintain and promote progress achieved before 2022 and to support government and initiatives. For example, in Turkey, to promote social cohesion among Syrian refugee and host populations, there has been a focus on service provision to alleviate tensions that are manifested over competition for services. In Southern areas of Turkey this resulted in expediting and scaling-up existing municipal plans to respond to natural population growth. External funding and expertise were provided to support municipalities in implementing public health and environmental policies.<sup>103</sup> In Ukraine, community-driven recovery through inclusive decision-making could help scaling up services through capacity building and rehabilitation of public infrastructure, thereby restoring capacity of local service providers to serve their communities and reducing potential competition over access to resources. There is a need for localized approaches to development so that the drivers of tensions are effectively addressed through initiatives

that are designed and carried out by local communities in support by their respective authorities, which – in turn – enhances the sustainability of the action.

### 3.5 Recommendations

#### Research & analysis

IOM should initiate further research and analysis to streamline its interventions and understand how interventions might promote or undermine social cohesion. Research and analysis should be conflict-sensitive and be inclusive of gender, disability, and social, economic and political vulnerabilities, shedding light on how human security dynamics are connected to various vulnerabilities.

Further research and analysis could be conducted on:

- Host-displaced population relationships;
- Returnee experiences;
- The impact of the war on youth, gender relations, and rural populations;
- Threats to human security faced by veterans;
- Return and reintegration of displaced populations;
- Communities' needs in mental health and psychosocial support and protection;
- Communities' needs in economic development and livelihood support;
- Innovative approaches and best practices of local initiatives to promote social cohesion and respond to the needs of the local population.

#### Inclusive and sustainable interventions

To avoid the aid dependency of beneficiaries and adopt a long-term recovery approach, it is important to design interventions that are conducive to the transition from humanitarian to development actions. Localized approaches will allow drivers of tensions to be effectively addressed through initiatives that are designed and carried out by local communities, which would enhance the sustainability of the action. To this purpose, IOM should design comprehensive multi-sectoral interventions to tackle human security issues, which may include activities on social cohesion, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPHSS), protection, economic development and livelihoods, education and human rights, with the below recommendations in consideration.

<sup>103</sup> 3RP, 2019

*Social cohesion*

- Ensure that interventions are conflict-sensitive and promote or mainstream social cohesion, to develop initiatives that are responsive to the needs of all community groups and avoid perceptions of unequal distribution of assistance.
- Monitor and respond to tensions between host, displaced and returnee populations and towards different ethnic groups and Russian language speakers.
- Learn from individuals and groups that have successful experiences in promoting social cohesion among host and displaced populations and explore whether they can be replicated elsewhere, through targeting financial support and capacity building.
- Work with the Government and other stakeholders to improve transparency and accountability, particularly over the distribution of support and access to services.
- Identify tangible, localized interventions that would help to promote social cohesion, for instance through the scaling-up of a particular service to ensure that there is the capacity to meet the needs of both host and displaced populations.

*MHPSS*

- Continue to provide mental health and psychological support (MHPSS) tailored to the specific needs of different vulnerable groups or to address specific issues; for example, the reintegration of veterans, the changing gender dynamics, the increasing number of people living with disabilities, call for integrated approaches that address both social cohesion and MHPSS needs. Provide emergency and long-term support and continue to invest in developing appropriate national capacity to respond to post-war needs.
- Mainstream MHPSS into wider programming approaches by examining how poor mental health undermines personal and community security by contributing to GBV, interpersonal violence and community tensions, particularly amidst the proliferation of and the increase in the use of firearms in civilian settings.
- Examine how MHPSS activities can be used to strengthen social cohesion by conducting targeted research in the link between mental health and social cohesion.
- Identify and facilitate practical solutions that can alleviate stress, such as financial support and access to appropriate services and legal documentation.

*Social protection:*

- Support the government and local service providers to provide adequate and timely social protection or cash assistance for vulnerable groups to avoid engagement in risky behaviour such as child labour and survival sex and to mitigate the risk of people being trafficked. Work with local organizations to raise awareness about potential risky behaviours and referral pathways for vulnerable groups.

*GBV and CRSV:*

- Support and strengthen the provision of psychosocial support and medical care for people who have experienced GBV and CRSV. Work with local organizations to sensitize the population to the issues of GBV and CRSV to reduce the stigma attached to those who have been affected and to raise awareness about the available support.

*Access to services:*

- Ensure continued access to public services by supporting access to legal identity documents and documentation through consumer-friendly and inclusive E-governance systems tailored to the needs of vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities and those with limited Ukrainian language skills, as well as older persons, unaccompanied minors, PLWD and those experiencing mental health problems.

*Economic development and livelihoods*

- Continue to include MHPSS in livelihoods interventions, addressing issues of marginalisation and discrimination through including vulnerable groups such as veterans, PLWD and minority groups and promoting the protection of workers' rights.
- Provide grants for local businesses that could contribute to increased personal security (e.g., increased economic independence and dignity) and community security (e.g., contributing to the inclusive recovery and development of the local economy).

*Mine action:*

- Coordinate with the mine action sector to raise awareness, particularly among displaced and mobile populations, about the dangers of landmines and

explosive ordnance contamination. Use IOM data tracking resources and information to monitor population flows and likely migration routes and work with the mine action sector to identify safe routes.

- Help provide access to alternative livelihood opportunities in contaminated areas to reduce the need for people to take risks by accessing contaminated areas.

## Education

- Identify ways to increase face-to-face teaching to get children and students back into education facilities, including through the introduction of or support for existing accelerated learning programmes.
- Support the design and implementation of long-term education plans to mitigate the impact that the war has had on the education and socialization of children, teenagers, and young adults.
- Use educational facilities to raise awareness about protection issues such as child labour and sex work and the value of formal education.
- Assess practical support needs of households to support education for children such as social protection support or a suitable place to study.

## Human rights

- Take advantage of more tolerant attitudes that are emerging to raise awareness of human rights and promote the inclusion of marginalized groups.

- Support the development and implementation of IHL and IHR conventions and related national laws and policies, in particular, those that were in progress before 2022 such as the promotion of the rights of women, PLWD and persons identifying as LGBTQ and measures to fulfil commitments to the Mine Ban Treaty.

## Good governance and empowered local actors

IOM should strengthen their partnerships with the Government of Ukraine and civil society through interventions on human security.

- Strengthen the capacity of the Government and civil society to facilitate social cohesion and restore the social contract in the long-term, for instance, by supporting national and subnational government structures and staff to provide services on social protection, legal documentation and to promote and protect human rights.
- Undertake long-term interventions to increase participation in public life and decision-making among all population groups to build on successful community-level initiatives and promote localization.
- Support women and marginalized groups to participate more fully in public life to ensure gender-sensitive responses in policy and practice.

The table below shows how the study findings and recommendations align with the human security, triple nexus and IOM's 4R Vision.

<b>IOM 4R Vision</b>		<b>Resilience:</b> Strengthening self-reliance & adaptability, while reducing & managing risks	<b>Response:</b> Saving lives, reducing suffering, protecting the most vulnerable	<b>Recovery:</b> Attaining stability & building a platform for sustainable development	<b>Reconciliation:</b> Enhancing empathetic relations, collaboration & positive peace
			<b>HDP Nexus</b>		
<b>Human Security</b>	<b>Vulnerabilities</b>	<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Humanitarian interventions</b>	<b>Development interventions</b>	<b>Peace Interventions</b>
	Factors that weaken the ability to cope and recover from sudden onset and chronic crises	The capacity to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond & recover from sudden onset & chronic crises	Short-term interventions to save lives and meet basic needs.	Long-term interventions at multiple levels to promote sustainable development	Immediate interventions with long-term goals to promote and protect social cohesion.

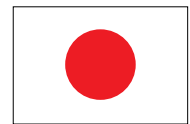
<b>Personal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mental health problems which make daily life more difficult, create inter-personal tensions and can lead to violence.</li> <li>- Death and physical injury</li> <li>- Changing dynamics between men and women create marital tensions</li> <li>- loss of childhood and education</li> <li>- veterans face challenges to reintegrate</li> <li>- Risky coping mechanisms to generate an income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- people developing new skills and taking on new roles and responsibilities, particularly women (although these may also be a burden)</li> <li>- veterans from previous conflict has developed resilience and could provide insights to providing support for veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support immediate mental and physical health needs</li> <li>- improve access to face-to-face education</li> <li>- Cash assistance and protection interventions to reduce risk taking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable interventions to provide support in the long-term for mental and physical health needs for all population groups</li> <li>- design interventions to address long-term education needs which include psychosocial support and fill education gaps which resulted from school closures of non-attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure interventions are conflict sensitive</li> <li>- analyse the root causes of vulnerabilities to understand their causes, do not assume vulnerabilities of certain groups without assessments, analyse how vulnerabilities interact to increase vulnerability and how an individual's vulnerability increases the vulnerability of another.</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-existing vulnerabilities exacerbated especially among groups with multiple vulnerabilities</li> <li>- Tensions between Russian and Ukrainian language speakers and those from East and West of the country increasing</li> <li>- new tensions emerging between host and displaced populations</li> <li>- (perception of) uneven distribution of assistance creating inter-communal tensions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some positive community level initiatives and emergence of CSOs</li> <li>- IDPs displaced in 2014/5 more resilient than newly displaced, feeling more integrated, participating in community initiatives</li> <li>- some shifting attitudes, people more tolerant as focus is on the war and survival</li> <li>- raise awareness of positive issues/ activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support community level initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build on successful community level initiatives</li> <li>- Support capacity development of local organizations</li> <li>- Promote localization</li> <li>- learn from IDPs who feel more settled to try to expedite their experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure interventions are conflict sensitive</li> <li>- Monitor context and tensions and respond as necessary to deescalate situation</li> <li>- Be transparent and accountable when delivering assistance</li> <li>- Aim to promote social cohesion and equality</li> <li>- Raise awareness about the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups and reduce discrimination</li> <li>- take advantage of shifting attitudes to reduce discrimination and improve access to rights</li> </ul>
<b>Political</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deterioration in service provision</li> <li>- Difficulties in accessing social protection or reduction in social protection</li> <li>- Difficulties in obtaining legal documentation and identity documents</li> <li>- Protection and human rights frameworks poorly implemented. War undermined some implementation processes and shifted focus to national security away from human rights</li> <li>- limited awareness of rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women have a more prominent role nationally and in some community level fora</li> <li>- internationally supported interventions have helped to raise awareness about certain issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- humanitarian protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support and improve e-governance and digitization of legal documents and personal records</li> <li>- Support the implementation of IHL and IHR Conventions and related national laws and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise awareness of rights</li> <li>- Support the adoption of IHL and IHR Conventions into national law and policies</li> <li>- Work with government partners when delivering humanitarian and development assistance to the population to avoid undermining the social contract</li> <li>- long-term interventions to increase participation in public life and decisions making among all population groups</li> </ul>

## 4. ANNEXES

### 4.1. References

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