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UHF Ukraine Humanitarian Fund



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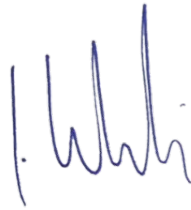
©DRC Ukraine, Mykolaiv, February 2023, Svitlana Vovk.

Spring 2023 is slowly unfolding in Ukraine and with that a new beginning – but sadly one that once again sees people across the country caught in distress and increasingly marked by what is now over one year of deepening humanitarian challenges, devastation and destruction. The implications of this conflict have since long extended beyond borders and continue to grow, impacting the global community.

The past year demanded tremendous effort from our entire organisation to respond to unprecedented humanitarian needs. Many of us have been deeply affected personally, like my Ukrainian colleagues who have been uprooted and displaced twice or more since 2014. Despite this, DRC staff were – and are - able to work tirelessly, day and night. Thanks to their hard work, courage, and dedication, DRC has been and continues to be able to support people in need.

Our efforts would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our donors and partners, whose contributions we deeply respect and appreciate. The Danish Refugee Council will continue to expand the delivery of life-saving activities to ensure that we in DRC can deliver the best possible and most relevant assistance to the people of Ukraine.

*Sincerely,  
Julian Zakrzewski  
Country Director,  
DRC Ukraine*



## Protection



**©DRC Ukraine, February 2023, Lviv Oblast.**

Dmytro\*, 61, from Donetsk Oblast, has been displaced twice since 2015. First, the fighting affecting Ukraine's eastern Donbas Region forced him to leave his home and all he knew and relocate from Horlivka to Kramatorsk. Now, once again Dmytro lost his home- and had to leave his apartment in Kramatorsk. He now lives in a collective centre, established in a former kindergarten in the village of Koshulyany, Chernivtsi Oblast.

For Dmytro life has been more than tough in the past years. He underwent complex surgery on his upper respiratory tract in the weeks before he had to flee his home and had hardly recovered before he had to pack and leave. Since the surgery, Dmytro lost his speech and is deprived of verbal communication, meaning that he now interacts mainly through text messages. Against all odds, and without family support or an income, optimism still lights his heart.

DRC, as part of its Individual Protection Assistance programme, provided Dmytro with a voice device that restored his ability to communicate and thereby revived his independence and human dignity. Dmytro is accepting his current situation and is thankful for being in a safe place and at a safe distance from the fighting – but he dreams of returning to Kramatorsk and back home to his apartment.

*By Iryna Kylymenna, DRC Protection Officer, Chernivtsi*

\*Names changed for confidentiality purposes



**©DRC Ukraine, March 2023, Chernihiv Oblast.**

Establishing effective communication with crisis and displacement affected communities is critical but also a process that requires adequate resource dedication, time and flexibility. At times, sharing experiences, thoughts, and feelings can help alleviate tensions and build trust within communities.

DRC's Psycho-Social Support (PSS) Team in Chernihiv Oblast has been working since late December 2022 to provide group-based sessions to conflict-affected and internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as the communities hosting them. The sessions are organised so that participants have the opportunity to engage with others from their community while taking part in various recreational activities, designed to promote

socialisation and create safe spaces where they can discuss their experiences and express their emotions.

Thanks to funding from the USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the European Union through its Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, DRC's PSS Team in Chernihiv has reached over 450 individuals as of late March 2023, with frequent requests for more psycho-social sessions.

*By Jessica Rowe, DRC Protection Manager, Chernihiv*



## Protection: Legal Assistance



**©DRC Ukraine, February 2023, Odesa.**

Iryna and her family, including their young granddaughter, Tetiana, were trapped in Kherson Oblast in the early months of 2022. They managed to leave in May 2022 and went to Odesa, before they decided to travel further afar.

In January 2023, Iryna turned to the NGO called [Tenth of April](#) for help. Since Tetiana, had never had a passport, her grandmother applied for one through the State Migration Service of Ukraine (SMS). In response, the officials there said that additional documents about the girl's father and his citizenship were required, given that the child was born abroad, and the father was not listed on her birth certificate.

But contact with the father was lost long ago and the family was not sure how to manage to quickly organise papers that could allow them to travel outside Ukraine.

Maya, a lawyer from Tenth of April, explained the process needed step-by-step and comforted the family. Just three weeks later, officials from the State Migration Service of Ukraine issued Tetiana a biometric passport finally enabling her to travel abroad and seek asylum outside of Ukraine.

Free legal aid is provided by the NGO "Tenth of April" in cooperation with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) thanks to the financial support of the USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). DRC legal aid activities across Ukraine are funded as well through means donated by private foundations and individuals primarily in Denmark.

*By NGO Tenth of April, Odesa*



**©DRC Ukraine, March 2023, Zakarpattia Oblast.**

In March 2022, Maryna moved with her daughter from Kharkiv to Vynohradiv, a city in Zakarpattia Oblast, after her apartment was damaged by attacks. Upon arriving in Vynohradiv, Maryna registered with the authorities as an internally displaced person (IDP) and began receiving social benefits. But shortly after, due to financial instability and lack of permanent work, she started planning to leave the country with her daughter.

In order to receive free legal aid on migration issues, Maryna contacted the Centre for Public Initiatives, a partner of DRC for legal assistance. During her consultation, the lawyer learned that Maryna had been struggling to find a job for a long time and suggested a suitable position at the Vynohradiv District Hospital. After the interview, Maryna was hired and no longer considered leaving the country to pursue a better life abroad. She had finally found financial stability and could provide herself and her child with adequate living conditions.

Free legal aid in Zakarpattia Oblast is provided by the Centre for Public Initiatives in cooperation with DRC, thanks to the financial support of the USAID's Bureau for

Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).

By Centre for Public Initiatives, Vynohradiv



## Capacity Building



©DRC Ukraine, February 2023, Chernihiv Oblast.

"Lampa" - meaning lamp in Ukrainian — is one of 12 civil society organisations awarded a grant by DRC using funds from the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF). As a grassroots organisation, Lampa focuses its activities on emergency response and support to internally displaced persons in Ukraine and conflict-affected individuals in an area called Snovsk in Chernihiv Oblast.

Lampa has provided humanitarian food kits and school sets to 800 beneficiaries in hard-to-reach areas, including over 150 people with disabilities.

"We are now expanding the geographical scope of our activities and are working towards engaging more people with various skills and experience," says Anton Alifirenko, Head of Lampa.

Given Lampa's access to people in hard-to-reach areas of Chernihiv, DRC was able to assist people in need in the aftermath of the Yeline shelling on 1 February 2023. DRC arrived in Snovsk to distribute 38 family hygiene kits and baby winterisation kits with clothing and hygiene items for 25 people from Yeline and nearby areas. The arrangements for the distribution point and needs assessment were made with Lampa in close coordination with the local authorities of Snovsk Hromada.



**©DRC Ukraine, February 2023, Chernihiv Oblast.**

In March-April 2022, many displaced persons seeking safety and security moved to the western regions of Ukraine. As the population in large cities and small settlements grew, tensions between IDPs, host communities, and shelter staff also increased.

Between June and December 2022, five mobile DRC teams comprising a psychologist and a mediator supported over 4,000 conflict-affected people in Lviv, Stryi, Rivne, Uzhhorod, and Mukachevo. The teams contributed to local conflict resolution and strengthened social cohesion.

The Lviv Mediation Center, under the Ukraine Confidence Building Initiative and with funding from Chemonics, partnered with DRC to provide psychological and mediation assistance to IDPs and people from host communities. More information can be found [here](#).

Additionally, seven civil society organisations (CSOs) providing humanitarian aid throughout Ukraine received capacity-building, psychological, and mentoring support. Individual psychosocial support (PSS) and mentorship sessions, as well as training for CSOs' employees, were provided to help improving their professional skills and work-life balance while facing a wide range of challenges arising from the severe humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

The frequent expression of gratitude from beneficiaries indicates the importance of psychological support for conflict-affected people and those who assist them.



## Economic Recovery



©DRC Ukraine, February 2023, Lviv.

First affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and soon after the consequences of the Russian Federation's military offensive in Ukraine in February 2022, thousands of small and larger businesses have been affected with their financial capacity to cope and keep up business being significantly decreased.

The private entrepreneur Stanislav from Mariupol who produced unique handmade leather goods —covers, purses, and wallets —is no exception. Before February 2022, through the international platform Etsy, he distributed goods to the international markets. Around 75% were shipped to the USA, and 25% to the EU and Australia. But due to the security situation, it became impossible to work in Mariupol. Under what seemed as constant shelling, Stanislav realised that he had lost his workshop in Mariupol, but he managed to escape and relocate to Cherkasy in western Ukraine.

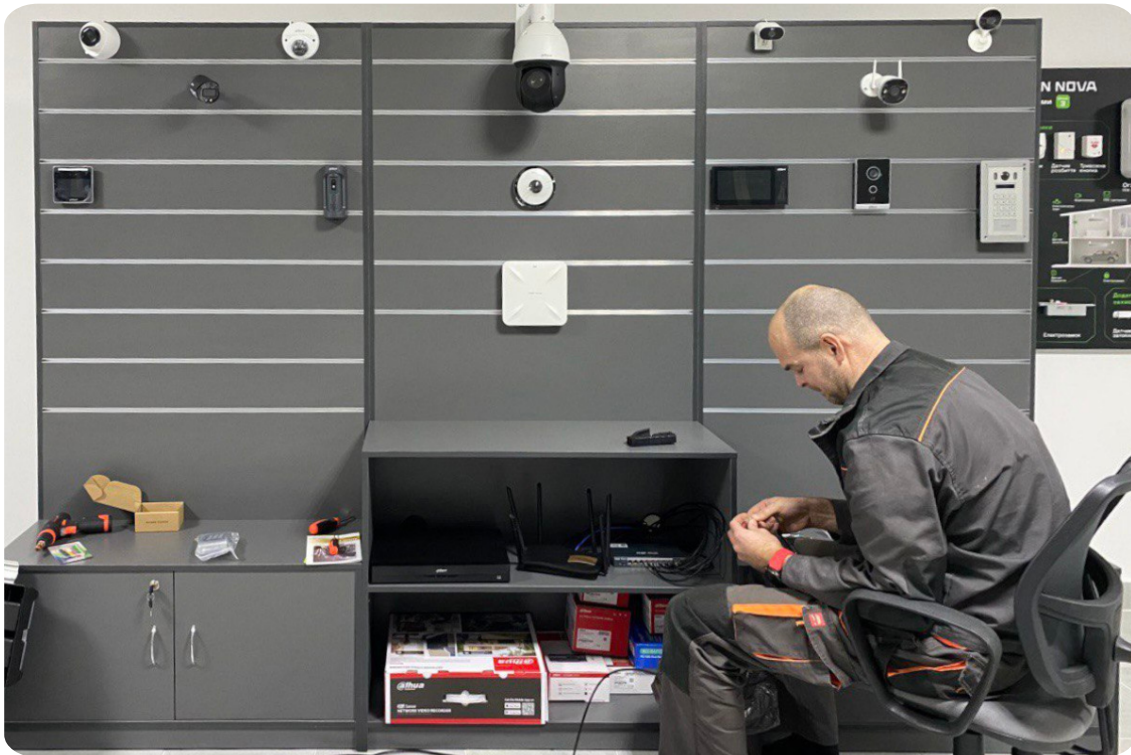
DRC helped Stanislav to resume business activities in Cherkasy and he soon after increased the revenues by roughly 10% after having received a grant.

“I could purchase a new sewing machine. This allowed me to resume and improve the production process and diversify sales. Also, now I am working on developing a new line of larger handmade leather goods such as bags and backpacks” says Stanislav. As an entrepreneur he is already on to his next idea, knowing the needs of people in Ukraine and plans to start production of handmade candles.



The business grants provided by DRC are based on funding from the governments of the United Kingdom and Switzerland. Additional related activities are enabled by contributions from private foundations and individual donors in Denmark.

*By Kateryna Markevych, DRC Economic Recovery Specialist, Kyiv*



**©DRC Ukraine, March 2023, Ivano-Frankivsk.**

“SB-Lehion” was a successful security services and cloud video surveillance company based in Mariupol. Due to the war, the company lost 80% of its equipment and premises, resulting in all staff losing their employment. Business owner Volodymyr and his family had to leave due to continued fighting in the area and relocated to Western Ukraine. There, he identified a high customer demand for the very same technologies and services he had provided in Mariupol. Despite his loss, Volodymyr rented a small office and began looking for investment to execute a business plan and purchase equipment to restart his lifelong endeavour.

Thanks to funding from the government of the United Kingdom and Switzerland, DRC provided financial support to cover expenditures on video surveillance servers, stand equipment, tools, and an uninterrupted power supply.

"We managed to restart the business and create four jobs, including three for people who were displaced and jobless. Now, we can provide quality services, install burglar alarms and video surveillance systems, which helps to reduce the number of crimes involving property damage or harm to citizens," says Volodymyr. The company is currently operating in the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast but plans to expand its activities throughout Ukraine.

"We are currently in the process of implementing our projects called ‘Safe House’, ‘Safe School’, and ‘Safe Kindergarten’," Volodymyr adds.



## Humanitarian Disarmament & Peacebuilding



©DRC Ukraine, Chernihiv Oblast, February 2023, Volodymyr Cheppel.

“In February 2022, it was a nightmare here,” says Tetiana\*, 40, from a village near Chernihiv city in the north of Ukraine. “When we heard and saw explosions nearby, we hurried to the cellar and had been living there for weeks getting out mainly just to cook food. Sometimes we ate nothing because of the intense shelling.”

The accident with Tetiana’s father Ivan\*, 67, happened on 7 March 2022 — he was collecting firewood with other villagers and on their way back, the van hit an anti-vehicle mine.

“There were three people in the front seats, and they got away with bruises — despite flying out through the front window of the van. Another man and I were in the cabin, and we were just above the place where the detonation happened,” Ivan tells. ‘The van was squashed like a cheap can,’ Tetiana adds. Ivan and Mykola\*, another seriously injured man (read his story [here](#)), were taken to the hospital. The surgeries and treatments were covered by state funds. However, he had to buy the titanium tube — a joint replacement that costs about €400. As Ivan and his daughter and grandchildren, had been living only on his pension in the past months with about €200 per month, they could not afford to buy the needed implant.

“We do not have relatives here and our neighbours are also seriously affected by the conflict - and so, we could not borrow money anywhere. I was desperate until Mykola told me about the possibility to receive a grant from DRC,” Tetiana says. The grant was quickly processed by DRC and covered the cost of the implant. “Without the titanium tube, my father would not have been able to move. He would just lie in a bed unable to even roll over”.

Today, Ivan can again ride his bicycle. He no longer needs to be looked after and can go fishing on his own, bringing him peace of mind, and bringing the family basses, crucian fish, or as recently a nine-kilo catfish.

Support provided to Ivan is possible thanks to funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. DRC’s Victim Assistance across Ukraine are funded as well through means donated by private foundations and individuals primarily in Denmark.

*By Volodymyr Malynka, DRC Communications Officer, Kyiv*

\*Names changed for confidentiality purposes.



**©DRC Ukraine, Kyiv, March 2023, Volodymyr Cheppel.**

In March 2023, DRC organised a roundtable event in Kyiv to discuss ways to enhance the coordination of Victim Assistance in Ukraine. More than 40 local and international organisations, ministries, and UN agencies shared their Victim Assistance activities and challenges from Protection, Mine Action, Health, Education, and Employment spheres. DRC presented a new intervention as well that will see a number of needs assessments and legal analyses to help better understand the conditions of victims of Explosive Ordnance (EO) accidents and the environments they live in.

“DRC will continue to support victims with individual cash grants. We have also designed several trainings for communities and schools on how to create more inclusive

environments for People with Disabilities, including victims of incidents caused by explosive remnants of war, as well as capacity-building training for national duty-bearers. Jointly with our Economic Recovery programme, we will also be working on creating more barrier-free workspaces as well as supporting survivor organisations. Finally, DRC will engage in advocacy on topics related to Victim Assistance – both with the public as well as with targeted stakeholders,” highlighted Nick Vovk, DRC Humanitarian Disarmament & Peacebuilding Programme Manager.

The roundtable event as well as support to victims of Explosive Ordnance were possible thanks to funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Netherlands.

*By Volodymyr Malynka, DRC Communications Officer, Kyiv*

\*Names changed for confidentiality purposes.

