

Activity: Minimizing the effects of military conflict and Civil Society sector strengthening and developing, peacekeeping

1. **The project “Overcoming the consequences of war together: Multinational conflict resolution and dialogue development through support of civil society in Ukraine and other conflict zones of Eastern Europe”** funded by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

The project was implemented from August 2016 till January 2019.

Impact:

1.1). Work on anti-discrimination issues - 8 trainers have been trained to transfer knowledge, so that discrimination in the post-conflict environment can be minimized.;

1.2). 3 training modules were carried out and 14 specialists -civil society representatives-were trained on the Forum-Theater methodology - special therapy using theatrical tools for working out of deep problems and trauma;

1.3). 18 professional supervisors were trained to provide free assistance to volunteer psychologists working with traumatized and conflict affected people; an international conference was held on trauma issues and the methods of work with it; to date, the trained specialists have carried out 400 free supervisions;

1.4). 20 people completed the training and grant support program for small businesses for the conflict affected people allowing them to better adapt to a peaceful life; an international conference on social entrepreneurship was held;

1.5). Domestic Violence Prevention Program: 14 trainers trained among the male activists to work with men; 7 regional campaigns against domestic violence were conducted. An international roundtable on successful practices in dealing with domestic violence in post-conflict zones was held;

1.6). The exchange of knowledge and experience on the integration of internally displaced persons into society, as well as the joint development of working methods and the selection of effective examples: exchange trips took place in Georgia, Ukraine and Armenia, methodological works on anti-discrimination and successful integration practices of IDPs were developed:

<https://kvl.org.ua/mater%D1%96ali-m%D1%96zhnarodnogo-proektu-podola%D1%94mo-nasl%D1%96dki-v%D1%96jni-razom-vikladen%D1%96-u-v%D1%96dkritij-dostup>

1.7). 32 grants were awarded for the support of civil society to minimize the consequences of the conflict.

2. The project «**Dialogue for Mutual Understanding and Law: European NGOs together to overcome the conflict in Donbass**» funded by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

Within the framework of this project, NGO "Country of free people" acted as a regional coordinator in Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the process of establishing an international platform for dialogue among civil society institutions and organizing joint activities aimed at overcoming the consequences of the military conflict and achieving peace in Ukraine.

Within the framework of the project, 2 visits of international delegations with the representatives of civil society of Ukraine, Germany, Poland, France, and Russia were organized. The purpose of the visits was to let the civil society representatives observe the real situation in the East of Ukraine and to establish a dialogue with local civil society institutions.

"Country of free people" representatives participated in international meetings in the countries of the European Union aimed at uniting and initiating a dialogue among civil society institutions of Ukraine, Russia and the countries of the European Union.

As a result of the project, in December 2017, an international platform CIVILM + was created that united non-governmental organizations and independent experts from Ukraine, Russia, Germany and other countries working in the human rights, humanitarian and peacekeeping spheres on issues related to the resolution of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine and overcoming its consequences.

The CivilM + platform operates on the basis of democratic values - respect for and protection of human dignity, respect for and implementation of fundamental human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the prevention of discrimination on any grounds. The CivilM + platform provides its participants with the opportunity to collaborate in joint initiatives and projects, the initiation and expression of common positions, mutual support and solidarity, systematization of knowledge, advanced training and improved coordinated work.

The document on the creation of the platform was signed by the organizations from 4 countries.

3. The project "**International Youth School of Peacekeeping**" Through the Art of Dialogue to **Peace** " was implemented in October 2018 within the framework of the thematic work of the international platform for civil society CivilMPlus.

The school was held in Ukraine, 20 young people from Western, Central and Eastern Ukraine (including the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions) as well as from North Caucasus (Chechen Republic and Ingushetia) participated in it.

It was incredibly important for the young people to travel outside the occupied territory and to have the opportunity to communicate with their peers. Of big importance was also the participation of young people from two countries in a state of tense relations - Russia and Ukraine. Russia was

represented by the Chechen republic and the Ingush republic. It was these regions that were selected because they had complex social and political events during the past 22 years (armed conflict in Chechnya, numerous terrorist attacks, etc.). And it is very important that our two groups met and could find a common language.

Through the project, the youth acquired the necessary knowledge and invaluable experience of conflict prevention and peaceful resolution of the conflict through negotiation techniques, mediation and compromise search, they strengthened peacekeeping capacity, and will promote the development of civil society guided by the principle of promoting peace and security throughout the world. Innovative techniques were applied such as Forum Theater, Social Theater, video clips, already tested in the implementation of previous projects, group work using methods of ART therapy, the development of constructive inter-ethnic dialogue skills (development of skills of mutual understanding in the conditions of activation of ethnic prejudice and group discrimination reduction of anxiety in intercultural relations, formation of cognitive and emotional empathy, modeling of positive behavior in the situation of interethnic interaction).

A platform was created for communication and peaceful dialogue among young people from both countries, based on creative tools, the language of art and the acquisition of knowledge that will help young people in solving propaganda problems.

(Video of the project: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=24&v=wYKf0Ln2wk8)

4. **International Youth Project "Diaries of History"** is implemented from October 2018 till August 2020 within the framework of the thematic work of the international platform for civil society CivilMPlus.

Purpose of the project: To promote reconciliation and rehumanization of the parties of the armed conflict in Donbass through work with individual and collective memory, implementation and support of dialogue activities.

Under the project, schoolchildren / young people from Ukraine (all parts of the country including non-controlled territories) and from Russian Federation will explore the topic of family and history, the processes of individual and collective memory formation, its impact on people and community. Our focus will be primarily on the memory of the Second World War. But participants can try to consider other topics of the historical past relating to everyone. The topics of family and history will be considered from two perspectives: families in history and history in family. In addition, a separate emphasis will be done on the preservation of events related to conflicts and tragedies of the 20th century in the individual, family and collective memory space.

During the meetings, the participants will visit places of memory, learn from different sources on the fate of families affected by the war and will be able to lay the foundations for speaking

tragic and controversial pages of family / personal history of the middle of the 20th and of the 21st century.

Also, a special workshop will be organized with modern young artists working with different techniques and formats. It will be organized for processing and transforming of the accumulated narrative and stories into an art product. They will become the basis of mobile exhibitions which will be used both for the dissemination of the outcomes and best practices of the project as well as a platform for public events and dialogue meetings in the regions.

Currently, the first module of training was held in which 23 young people aged from 18 to 24 took part. Most of them, after returning to their communities, held small workshops where they shared the experience they gained while being at the school.

Activity: Work along the “contact line” (0-10 km from the front line): humanitarian aid, livelihoods and economic development programs.

- 1-3. Projects aimed at restoring the livelihoods of vulnerable small-scale farming families living along the contact line, funded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO UN):

The project "**Emergency assistance to restore the livelihoods of vulnerable small-scale farming families affected by the conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk regions**" (TCP/UKR/3502) in 2015-2016;

The project "**Emergency assistance to restore the livelihoods of vulnerable Roma households affected by the conflict in Donetsk and Kharkiv regions**" in 2015-2016;

The project "**Emergency food security assistance through provision of critical agricultural inputs in the conflict affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions**" (OSRO/UKR/601/CAN) in 2017-2018.

In the framework of joint projects with FAO UN, more than 45.5 thousand vulnerable households benefited from the humanitarian aid distribution such as animal feed; poultry: chickens, ducks, turkeys along with poultry feed and /or cash grants for the purchase of feed; hay; potatoes seeds; corn and sunflower seeds; drip irrigation systems; rabbits with cells; bee families together with the hives and the necessary beekeeping sets.

The geography of the projects covered more than 300 settlements along the whole demarcation line in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In providing the farming inputs, the projects' goal was to safeguard the food security and livelihoods of the most at-risk families affected by the conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, to improve nutrition and to prevent further economic losses due to the conflict; to provide the affected population with high-quality food products of the small-scaled farming families; to provide access to water, to water the gardens in order to increase their harvest through the distributions of the drip irrigation systems in the most affected rayons where the supply of tap water was temporarily absent or unconstant because of the damage caused by military actions; to support developing of local businesses through the distribution of the bee families together with the hives and the necessary beekeeping sets.

The result of these projects was helping local people to reach the level of self-development and self-sufficiency when they could grow their own products and livestock in order not to depend on humanitarian aid.

- 4-8. A program for the provision of multifunctional electronic vouchers for vulnerable groups of people living along the “contact” line; introduction of the "Voucher for Work" program with the involvement of local communities and local authorities in the implementation of the program; support for local businesses, namely, owners of local stores in the combat area.

The project **“Improvement of the food security and livelihoods of vulnerable conflict-affected population of Donbass, Eastern Ukraine”** (“CASPER 2016-45”) funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Crisis and Support Centre) in 2016.

The project **“Mitigating the impact of conflict on vulnerable households living along the contact line through the provision of essential hygiene items and support to local economy”** funded by the UNICEF (2016-2017)

The project **“Improving food security and enhancing local economy in conflict-affected rural areas close to the contact line in Eastern Ukraine”** funded by “Pope for Ukraine” Initiative (2017)

The project **“To improve the food security and livelihood of vulnerable conflict-affected populations in Donbass”** (“CASPER 2017-31”), funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Crisis and Support Centre) in 2017.

The project **“Improving food security and access to most basic needs in conflict-affected areas close to the contact line in Eastern Ukraine”** funded by “Pope for Ukraine” Initiative (2018)

In general, the assistance in the form of electronic vouchers was provided in 2016-2018 to 19,181 vulnerable households living along the contact line in Donetsk and Luhansk regions for a total amount of more than UAH 20 million;

850 beneficiaries took part in the Voucher for Work program and received electronic vouchers for work in 1-5 rounds for a total amount of more than UAH 1.7 million;

29 institutions received electronic vouchers for the purchase of hygiene items and household chemicals: schools, kindergartens and social institutions (nursing homes, psycho-neurological dispensary), located along the contact line in Donetsk and Luhansk regions;

More than 100 local stores have taken part in the projects.

The essence of the program is that the beneficiary of the project (and these are the most vulnerable households) can come to the partner store and get absolutely free of charge their most needed food or hygiene products. The voucher can be spent in one or many purchases (up to the beneficiary) during its availability term –1 month in most projects – to any items available at their local shop. Such an approach gives people the opportunity to buy fresh food items (milk, meat, vegetables, bread...) that cannot be delivered in ordinary food packages.

In order to implement this program, the special software was developed and installed in the partner shops.

The nature and scope of works within the framework of the "Work for a voucher" were determined in cooperation with the local administrations and were aimed at:

— Small rehabilitation works in the settlement concerning public areas, schools or kindergarten, parks and contribute to a clean environment, repairing and whitewashing of bombshelters, trimming of trees in an emergency, damaged as a result of shelling etc.

— Socially-oriented assistance, mainly related to isolated elderly people living alone: to fix the fence, to cut wood, to plant and water the garden, helping with purchases or with paying the utilities, home help and care and of course communication.

The next impact of the projects is the stimulation and development of the local economy. In the frame of the projects' implementation, local shops were able to import a larger range of goods and created additional jobs (full time offers and partial employment) due to profits received during their participation in the projects; opened new departments and new points of sale - especially in small front-line settlements, where previously there were no stores; a socially-oriented approach toward shops' clients was launched (for example, home delivery of goods to the local residents of the settlement with limited mobility, children's playgrounds and cafes were open next to the shops, etc.) — all residents of the villages, not only the beneficiaries of the project, were satisfied with this situation.

9-10. Providing multipurpose cash grants for the vulnerable beneficiary households living along the contact line.

The project **"To improve the food security and livelihood of vulnerable conflict-affected populations in Donbass"** ("CASPER 2017-31"), funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Crisis and Support Centre) in 2017.

The project **“Improving access to basic needs for vulnerable households of the beneficiaries by providing multipurpose cash grants in the areas affected by the conflict in Eastern Ukraine close to the contact line”** funded by “Pope for Ukraine” Initiative (2018)

The overall purpose of the projects was to reduce the effects of the conflict - which had a negative impact on the access for the most vulnerable to the basic needs - by increasing the food security of vulnerable households living along the contact line, provision of basic access to medicines, hygiene items and household chemicals, heating materials during the winter season and assuring the compliance of the provided assistance with the needs and promoting the sense of dignity for the beneficiary households by providing them a choice.

In total, 6,868 vulnerable households received cash assistance within the projects for a total amount of more than UAH 15.7 million.

Activity: Rebuilding infrastructure

1. The project **“Improvement of teaching and learning conditions for 326 students in Hirnyk secondary school no. 17, Donetsk region, through rehabilitation of the building”** was implemented in 2018 in partnership with ChildFund Deutschland e.V. as well with its financial support, and with financial support of the main sponsor BILD hilft e.V. “Ein Herz für Kinder”.

Due to the active military actions, the infrastructure in the East of Ukraine was seriously damaged or destroyed: the damage was caused both to private sector buildings and educational institutions, medical institutions, water supply networks, electricity supply, etc.

The main objective of this project was to provide access to safe education for children from front-line areas.

Within the framework of the project, the overhaul of the hard and soft part of the roof of the school building in Hirnyk city, Donetsk region, not far from the front line, was realized. The roof was in an emergency and constantly leaked.

Also, the design and estimate documentation was prepared and transferred to the school administration for further improvement of the building. The complete design estimate project documentation included the following sections: modernizing thermal conditions which include walls insulation, replacing the windows and doors; replacing the boiler and reconstructing the heating system; repairing interior rooms (dining room, gym, toilet rooms etc.) and finishing work.

Activity: Protection and development of children and youth, work with parents and caregivers, providing psycho-social support

As part of this activity, the Children and Youth Public Center was established in Kramatorsk; on a regular basis, mobile visits of children's teachers' teams, facilitators, psychologists to the front-line settlements were carried out; a series of rehabilitation children's camps and exchange trips were held.

The project **“Improving the quality of psychological support for children, youth, parents and guardians through the work of the public center in Kramatorsk and the work of the mobile groups along the contact line in the Donetsk region”** funded by European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) in 2016-2017.

The project **“Center for psychosocial support of children, parents and guardians "Generation UA" in the city of Kramatorsk”** funded by Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany in 2018-2019.

The project **“Healthy recreation of 40 children from the front-line area of Donetsk region”** funded by Chilfund Deutschland in 2017.

The project **“Children’s rehabilitation camp”** funded by “Perspektive Russland” in 2015 and 2016.

Within the framework of the projects the methods were applied: of the art therapy HEART (aimed at the removal of emotional stress, the development of imagination and creative thinking, accepting who you are, getting rid of fear-through art and creativity), of the program “Journey of Hope” (aimed at development of communication, creative skills, revaluation of values, increase of resistance to stress), of the program “Child to Child” (identification of the problems of society, the formation of children's goal-setting skills, studying and practice of the basics of project management. Within the framework of the program, the children's initiative groups received 5 grants for their own projects: "Multimedia Space", "Courses for the Medical Aid", "Gym" and others), of the program “Life Skills and Resiliency for Youth” (aimed at supporting teenagers and their parents, development of leadership skills, ability to find solutions to conflicts and find a compromise), of the program “ Positive Paternity” (aimed at supporting parents and guardians) and others, as well as excursions, hikes, master classes, cinema clubs, creative evenings, sports competitions, cultural events and other events for children and youth were organized.

In total, through the implementation of the projects, the psychological and social support was provided to more than 5,000 children and 1,000 parents and guardians.

Activity: Providing psycho-social support for the affected population, namely elderly people

The project **“Psycho-social support for elderly people”** funded by CF “Bread for the World” in 2017.

The project **“Psycho-social support for elderly people”** in the partnership with Help Age International in 2015-2016.

The project **“Psycho-social assistance for elderly people ”** funded by “Perspektive Russland” in 2018.

The purpose of the projects was providing maximum support and care for the elderly, providing them with social and psychological assistance.

The projects involved social workers to provide psychosocial support and individual social support for the elderly which included home help and care, making purchases, communication etc; additional visits were performed in case of an urgent need (for example, urgent accompanying of the beneficiary to the hospital, etc.).

In total, during the course of the projects, the assistance was provided to almost 200 elderly people for individual support within 2-6 months.

Activity: Minimizing the effects of military conflict and advocacy

The project **“Ensuring legal protection of internally displaced persons in Ukraine”** funded by European Union in 2016-2018.

On the basis of NGO “Country of free people” within the project frame, a free legal office was established in Kramatorsk which purpose is to provide primary and secondary legal assistance to the population affected by the conflict, in particular internally displaced persons and socially vulnerable population in Kramatorsk.

Within the framework of the project legal assistance and support was provided to 478 people, 70% of which are IDPs; 347 procedural documents were filed: complaints, applications, requests, lawsuits, and others.

In addition, lawyers and jurists of the legal office took part in the process of improving the regulatory framework in the field of the rights of internally displaced persons through participation in public discussions, round tables, forums and presenting their own recommendations on changes in the current legislative system and mechanisms for its implementation.

