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Policy study

**LOCAL  
DEMOCRACY  
AND SOCIAL  
INTEGRATION OF  
IDPS IN UKRAINE**  
DURING THE  
RUSSIAN FULL-  
SCALE INVASION



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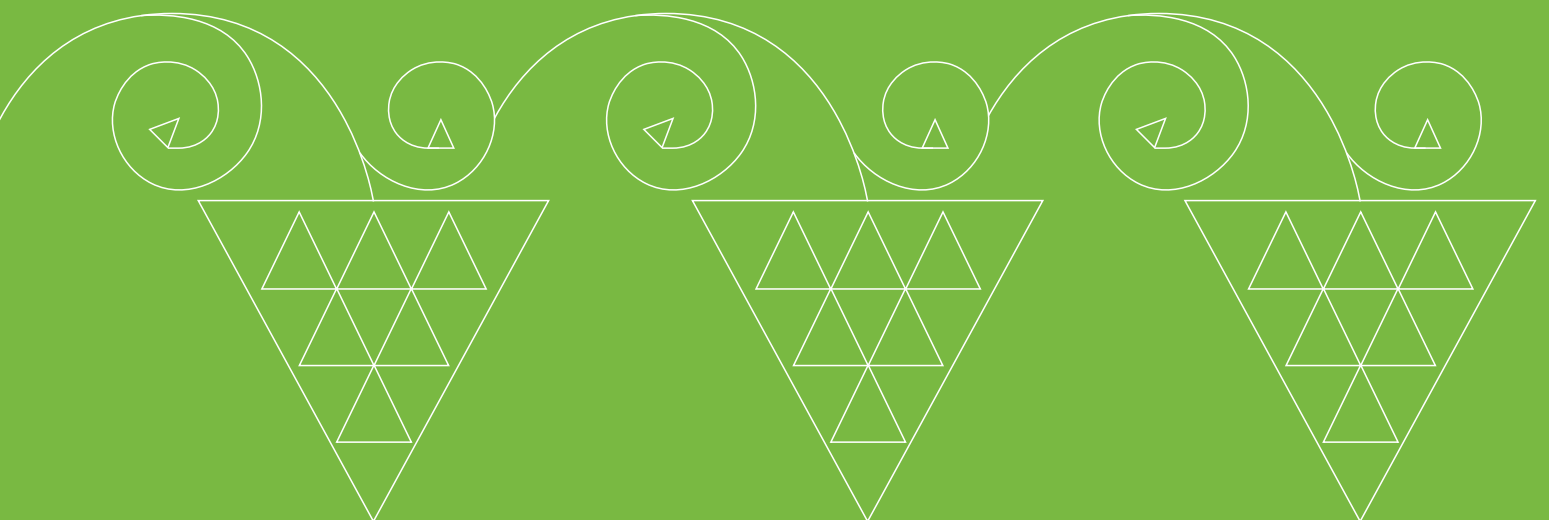
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

<b>ASC</b>	Administrative Service Center
<b>CMU</b>	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organization
<b>DMA</b>	District Military Administration
<b>FDA</b>	Future Development Agency
<b>FG</b>	Focus group
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>LSG</b>	Local self-government authority
<b>MinDigital</b>	Ministry of Digital Transformation
<b>MKP</b>	Compact Living Spaces (Places of collective housing for IDPs)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>PTSD</b>	Post-traumatic stress disorder
<b>RMA</b>	Regional Military Administration
<b>SES</b>	State employment service
<b>USVF</b>	Ukrainian Social Venture Fund

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Internal displacement of over 5 million people in Ukraine due to the Russian war of aggression faces a wide variety of local responses while challenging especially small municipalities (80,000 people or less), as they lack governance tools to accommodate diversity. This study explores the role of local democratic governance in the social integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and maps the ecosystem of IDP support and integration.

This ecosystem includes national and local governance structures, actors and functions in the system and identifies gaps, the closure of which can support the successful integration of IDPs in host communities.

Methodologically, the report relies on a qualitative study based on interviews, focus groups and observations with 41 individuals representing NGOs who support IDPs, IDP initiatives, relocated NGOs and local authorities in Cherkasy oblast and Zakarpattia oblast during May–August 2023.

### **Governance of IDP-related issues is intricate, involving various stakeholders.**

While significant social services are provided in challenging circumstances, a geographical and social gap exists between resource providers (international entities, national authorities) and those in need. This underscores the importance of representation, coordination- and organisational functions that local actors like public authorities and civil society, who directly engage with displacement challenges, provide for effective governance.

### **Local democracy's core principles - participation, equity and accountability - proved useful in the governance of displacement-related issues. Participation of different stakeholders in local governance increased overall.**

However, IDPs seem rarely involved in implementing solutions, while IDPs proactively request that **local-self government authorities (LSGs)** consult with them regarding their matters. Equity contributes to social cohesion when local actors diplomatically balance their responses to the needs of IDPs and community's residents while considering their unique situations (e.g., when the homes of the community's residents are destroyed). Collaborative governance around the complex displacement issues contributes to the alternative accountability forms complementing the conventional system of checks and balances.

### **Local programs, spaces, digital technologies, and social entrepreneurship facilitate stakeholder interaction in the IDP support and integration ecosystem.**

Programs allow targeted allocation of resources. Physical and discursive spaces nurture networks, aiding integration, and global-local collaboration. Vital support for these spaces is needed, especially for professional facilitators in sensitive interactions and ensuring safety in physical spaces during the ongoing war. Social media, digital platforms, and e-governance systems enhance coordination and evidence-based policymaking, necessitating continuous capacity building and safety measures. Social entrepreneurship encourages innovation and dignified problem-solving among IDPs, with the potential for amplification through communities of practice.

### **The institutional framework for IDP integration accommodates a diverse stakeholder ecosystem with overlapping functions spanning different distances from IDPs.**

While seemingly inefficient, this redundancy offers advantages in crisis

scenarios by providing alternatives for essential services. Given the ongoing war context and Ukraine's resistance to the Russian invasion, donor efforts should prioritise resilience over efficiency, investing in redundant systems, barrier-free infrastructure, mental health support, and stakeholder coordination. Donors should focus on fostering social cohesion, enabling collaborative governance, and facilitating training to enhance trust-building and effectiveness within the IDP integration system.



## INTRODUCTION

The Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 left almost twelve million people seeking new homes away from hostilities, with 5.4 million people recognised as internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Ukraine (IOM, 2023b). Although Ukraine has been dealing with the issue of internal displacement since Russia's first invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014, dealing with the 2022 wave is more challenging. A sheer number of people needing help (ca. 15% of the pre-2022-invasion population) and martial law, introduced due to the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022, complicate humanitarian and integration tasks.

**Internal displacement brings about significant problems and threats to well-being as people essentially must start their lives anew. Poverty is the most acute threat associated with displacement.** 65% of IDPs live in households with a monthly income level per household member equal to or less than 115 EUR [4,666 UAH], the "real subsistence minimum" (Kobzin, 2022). **Accommodation** is a top5 need of IDPs in Ukraine, with almost a quarter of respondents reporting it in June 2023 (IOM, 2023c). Soaring rental costs, driven by heightened demand, particularly impact vulnerable families like single parents (Minich & Sereda, 2023). Due to a lack of affordable options on the rental market, ca. **100,000 people live in about 4,000 collective centres** without sufficient privacy (Ukrinform, n.d.). IDPs commonly face job loss after displacement, and finding new employment is challenging (IOM, 2023a). Limited job opportunities, especially in small towns and rural areas, low salaries, and challenging work conditions hinder IDPs' job search. Discrimination based on age, language proficiency, and stereotyping of IDPs as "temporary resources" exacerbates the problem (Feofilova & Skrypnyk, 2022).

**Healthcare poses** another challenge (Sociological Center "Socinform," 2023). IDPs lack sufficient access to medical care due to financial constraints and the shortage of medical professionals, particularly in rural regions. **Psychological support** is crucial, especially for vulnerable groups, as mental health issues are widespread among IDPs. Many families of IDPs greatly need assistance with caring for children, elderly people, or people with disabilities. Additionally, displaced children face hurdles in education, particularly those with disabilities. The lack of specialised schools and financial resources for remote learning creates obstacles (Shcherban, 2022).

Considering the urgency of meeting the IDPs' needs, **internal displacement represents a policy challenge** for all in territorial communities (hromadas), but it has larger implications for community cohesion in smaller municipalities (80,000 people or less). Unlike big cities, these hromadas tend to be tight-knit and homogenous, lacking governance tools to accommodate diversity. In the centre and west of Ukraine especially, they had less experience accommodating the displaced since 2014 as people mostly settled in big cities in the government-controlled regions in the east of Ukraine. The arrival of new people needing homes, jobs and basic everyday items, with traumatising experiences and (perceived) different ways of living, may cause ruptures in communities' social fabric due to perceived otherness or tensions on material ground. At the same time, newcomers bring new skills,

knowledge, practices, expertise and worldviews that can be sources of growth and innovation for the host communities.

**How smaller communities deal with newcomers varies and is a subject of this study.** While most recent surveys of IDPs reveal an immediate need for humanitarian aid, housing and legal consultation, the **present study explores the role of local democratic governance in the social integration of IDPs.**

We define social integration as a process by which newcomers become incorporated into the social fabric of the host communities and the extent of their participation in the local community institutions. The study maps the ecosystem of IDP support and integration that includes national and local governance structures, actors and functions in the system and identifies gaps, the closure of which can support the successful integration of IDPs in host communities. This study is based on the assumption that governance - a process of decision-making, coordination and accountability - is a critical factor in the integration of IDPs, while social cohesion is a desired policy outcome to support continued resilience against Russian aggression.

**Methodologically,** the report relies on a qualitative case study based on interviews and focus groups with 41 individuals representing NGOs who support IDPs, IDP initiatives, relocated NGOs and local authorities in Cherkasy oblast. Two communities – Shpola (16.000 res.) and Uman’ (82.000 res.) – were analysed in-depth, as they are different in size, and their authorities were open to providing insights. The region was selected as a typical case for dealing with IDP integration in the centre and west of Ukraine, and also, as such, where some of the most active partners of Kyiv Dialogue are present.

The interviews and focus groups were recorded and systematically analysed using specialised software (MAXQDA). In August 2023, the observation was conducted in Zakarpattia oblast in two communities, Perechyn and Mukacheve, corresponding in their size as small and medium to Shpola and Uman’ respectively. Desk research was used to map the legal-administrative framework. See the detailed description of the methodology in Annex 1.

The report is structured as follows: The next section presents the context for IDP integration. Sections Two to Four present the results of the case study, starting from mapping stakeholders and their functions in the ecosystem of IDP integration and then zooming in on the relevant application of local democracy principles and tools. The report concludes with a list of implications the findings have for donor support of IDP integration.

# 1. THE CONTEXT FOR IDP INTEGRATION

## Multi-level governance and local democracy under martial law

The 2014 decentralisation reforms altered administrative organisations of the lowest governance tier and empowered local self-government at the level of territorial communities (hromadas or municipalities). Local self-government authorities (LSGs) at the municipal level received extended competencies in social service provision and organising local development, supported by fiscal autonomy. Most profoundly, LSGs have increased access to tax revenues (Minfin, 2023, 2023). The reform also gave an impetus to more transparent, accountable, and increasingly collaborative local governance (TI Ukraine, 2018; Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, 2023b).

The introduction of martial law<sup>1</sup> due to the full-scale Russian invasion had **implications for Ukraine's multi-level governance system**. Fiscal and administrative centralisation has been a natural response of the national authorities considering the need for quick decision-making for defence. Thus, all other expenses than defence are subject to regulation on the prioritisation of payments by the State Treasury, which can halt payments when the state is short on cash<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, a paradox emerged when LSGs have a substantial surplus on their balance sheets (e.g. by August 1, 2023, they accumulated UAH 186 billion or ca. EUR 4,65 billion), but they cannot manage them (Ekonomichna Pravda, 2023; Ministry of Finance, 2023).

At the same time, local state (military) administrations use more discretion in allocating budgets without prior consultation with the councils of that level<sup>2</sup> and were entrusted with organising the provision of social services<sup>3</sup>. In light of the fiscal and administrative constraints on LSGs and their critical knowledge of local context and needs, coordination between levels of authority gains importance to ensure an effective response to the displacement crisis. Yet, despite the reported coordination with central authorities on strategic decisions, in 2022, LSGs perceived their ability to influence those decisions and the responsiveness of central authorities to their feedback as limited (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, 2023a, p. 35).

**The introduction of martial law due to the full-scale Russian invasion had implications for Ukraine's local democracy but did not cancel it.**

**Elections and referenda** are prohibited<sup>4</sup>. Critically, **transparency has been curtailed**: drafts of local self-government acts need not be made public<sup>5</sup>. Similarly, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) restricted the publication of open data (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, n.d.-a). At the same time, the **right for peaceful assembly** has been limited but not suspended: unless the military command explicitly

prohibits peaceful assemblies due to security considerations, mass events, rallies, and other gatherings may occur upon notification to local authorities<sup>6</sup>.

**Participatory democracy mechanisms** can be used almost in full scope, including general citizen assemblies, public hearings, consultative surveys, bodies of the self-organisation of the population, i.e. neighbourhood committees, and e-petitions<sup>7</sup>. In practice, however, in-person gatherings such as public hearings may be hard to organise, considering internal displacement, security concerns and general limitations on peaceful gatherings. Instead, local authorities may conduct online public hearings, consultative surveys and meetings with smaller stakeholder groups considering the security situation (e.g., see the case of Vynnytsia: MyVin, 2023). Local initiatives and e-petitions are at the citizens' disposal without significant limitations (Fedchenko, 2023). **The observation is, however, that authorities prefer informal communication and coordination with non-governmental actors (such as volunteers) – via messengers and personally – as these are faster.**

The **participatory budget**, to which no national regulation applies, has been suspended in most municipalities due to prioritising expenses for defence and security (Laboratory of Legislative Initiatives, 2023).

## National policy for IDP integration

Since the 2014 first wave of displacement due to Russia's annexation of Crimea and incursion in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the social services **ecosystem** has been gradually moving towards meeting basic needs (See Annex 3 for a summary).

First, the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons" (hereafter, **the Law on IDP rights**) has defined IDP status, the procedure for registration in a unified database (Kobzin et al., 2020) and the rights for social protection, education, employment, non-discrimination & voting right, humanitarian aid and medical care, pre-school and school education for children<sup>8</sup>.

Second, the national **Strategy of the State Policy on Internal Displacement 2023-2025** (hereafter, Strategy) emphasises the integration and adaptation of IDPs in the host communities as potential drivers for their development and setting state commitments for providing social support for IDP's basic needs<sup>9</sup>. Finally, numerous social security laws and regulations have been adopted to facilitate access to cash, housing and jobs (see Annex 3).

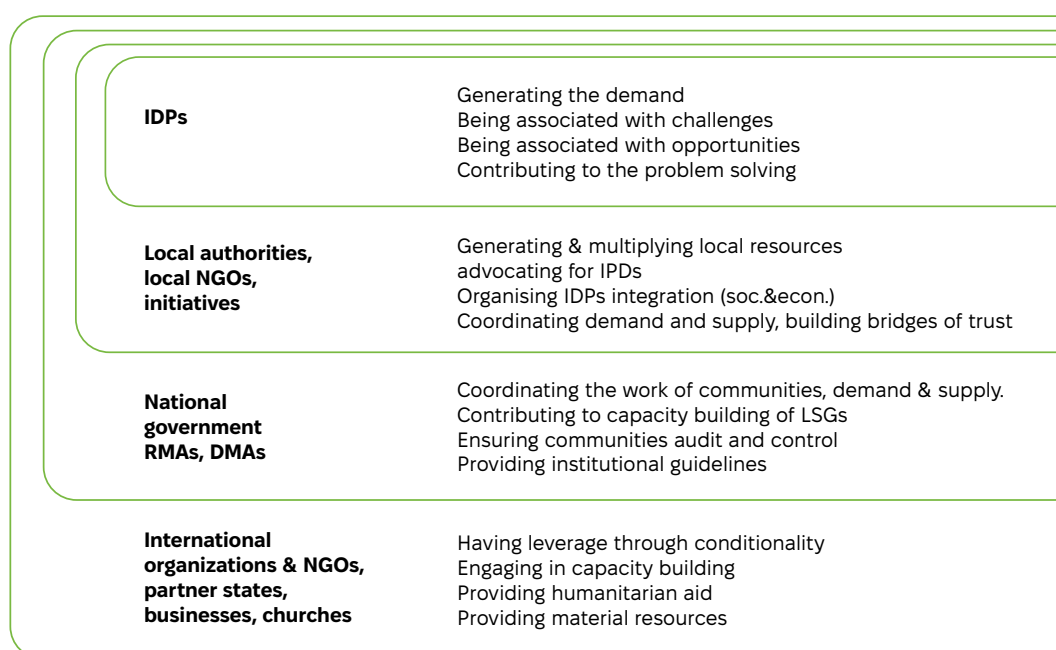
**Thus, public authorities had solid institutional instruments to deal with the massive wave of internal displacement in 2022, while the governance of related challenges in practice caught especially small communities unprepared.**

## 2. STAKEHOLDERS AND FUNCTIONS IN THE GOVERNANCE OF IDP-RELATED POLICIES

Governance of IDP-related issues is a complex sphere that requires the engagement of many stakeholders. On the one hand, the extent of the war-triggered crises is so large that no single group of actors can provide the required response, especially under conditions of the ongoing war. The extent of the social services provision in Ukraine is already remarkable, given the severe conditions.

On the other hand, the actors providing humanitarian aid and material resources – i.e. international organisations, funds, partner states, international NGOs, and international businesses – and actors providing the institutional frameworks – national authorities – are most distanced from those people who require those resources, due to the geographical or social distance.

This structure makes the actors with organizational and coordination functions – local public authorities and civil society – critical to sustaining the system. Local actors, including regional and district military administrations, subordinated to the state executive and local self-governance bodies in the communities, but also civil society and private sector actors are those who interact with the challenges of massive, forced displacement directly. Thus, they are best positioned but also highly incentivized to make sure the governance of those challenges is effective. Figure 1 below presents the stakeholders' overview and functions according to their proximity to the IDPs.



**Fig. 1: Mapping of stakeholders, their key functions, and proximity to IDPs**

## IDPs

The first tier of stakeholders is IDPs, who generate the demand for public response: displaced individuals, NGOs, businesses, and public authorities. Multiple of our interlocutors referred to **different groups of IDPs** and proposed that each of them requires different strategies: Vulnerable social groups of IDPs, such as elderly people or those with restricted mobility, require a permanent supply of food, medicine, and personnel for care; another group are ambitious working population, who seek opportunities and need support in their endeavours to be sustainable.

The interlocutors also note a third group of able-bodied people who settle with social support and do not strive for employment. Such examples feed the stigmatisation of all the IDPs as unwilling to work. At the same time, respondents recognize psychological trauma (PTSD) as a possible explanation for such a lack of motivation.

Other reasons mentioned were informal employment or rational calculation of effort to the payment in a job, compared to social payments, or the proposed job's inadequate status. Because of the variety of underlying reasons for the lack of employment initiatives, this third group of IDPs is the most challenging to develop strategies for dealing with. These differences highlight, however, the need for a differentiated policy approach to IDP's economic integration.

Our interlocutors felt that this differentiated understanding was not broadly widespread. The negative perceptions of otherness, competition or burden prevail over the ones that associate IDPs with the potential (see also IREX & Sotsinform, 2023):

### **IDPS VIEW OF THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER'S POLICY:**

Unfortunately, our local employment center's policies don't align with IDPs' interests. They prioritize any job to remove individuals from the job-seeker list, causing frustration and negative experiences. The center holds a stigma against IDPs, assuming they're unwilling to work. While I don't want to devalue certain roles, working outside my specialization is tough and somewhat demeaning. ...

I hope state institutions prioritize individuals' needs over quotas, plans, or deregistration, focusing on finding suitable employment.

**Representative of an IDP initiative, FG 1, 26.6.23**

At the same time, there are numerous examples when displaced individuals or organizations proved to be valuable resources of expertise and have been recognized as such, especially when engaging directly in solving IDP-related challenges.

### LOCAL CASES OF LSG-DRIVEN EMPLOYMENT FOR IDPS

Avdiivka military administration has an agreement with Uman' community to accommodate 70 people, while two colleagues from the Avdiivka administration were integrated into the Uman' department of public services. Another example is the head of Kherson water supply becoming the lead engineer in the water supply in Uman', while significantly strengthening their local expertise.

Interview, LSG representative, Uman', 8.8.23

## Local self-government authorities and civil society

The second tier of stakeholders includes **civil society and local self-government authorities** – the closest ones to the IDP-related policy challenges. They are the bridge between the IDPs and those able and willing to provide resources to support basic needs.

The **local self-government (LSG) authorities** we interviewed responded to the IDP-related crises with significant structural changes in their system of governance: They introduced dedicated deputy mayor positions and departments and increased staff to fulfil the organizational and coordination functions properly.

They were repurposing spaces and some national subventions to provide accommodations and rehabilitation spaces as they carry the responsibility for the housing pool (the Law on IDP Rights, Art. 11 and Provision of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 495). Proactive LSGs may design additional support measures.

For example, to encourage employment, some created assistance centers for job-seekers and involved IDPs in paid community services (Oliylyk, 2023a). Such behaviour indicates that these LSGs view IDPs as (re)source for community development: because the decentralization reform enabled LSGs to derive substantial tax revenues directly from activities of economic actors in their municipality (e.g. 64% of personal income tax), they have a stake in attracting enterprises and qualified workforce to their municipalities.

Likewise, multiple **civil society organizations (CSOs)** reported changing their focus of work towards IDP support; some of the initiatives existing since 2014 decided to formalize and mobilize as they realized the huge extent of the challenge since the full-scale invasion in 2022. The ecosystem includes IDP initiatives, often emerging from the organization of the so-called "compact living place" (MKP - collective centers for IDPs) or organizations that emerged from the previous wave of displacement after Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territories in 2014.

Displaced NGOs from occupied territories or areas of military hostilities are

often engaging in IDP-related activities. Another important NGO category is professionalized organizations or networks supporting IDP-related individual initiatives.

While doing many different things, this **tier of stakeholders** engages in **four core functions**: First, they accommodate **social integration** and provide support to the IDPs, mainly by mobilizing volunteers and engaging professionals for child- and elderly care, and psychological support and rehabilitation of the veterans. LSGs **organize** spaces and the process flow for the IDPs – from registration, access to humanitarian assistance, social payments, and access to education and healthcare (Law on IDP rights, Art. 11).

Both groups of stakeholders are considered as “bridges”, because they **collect needs** in their direct encounters with IDPs, but also through surveys and middlemen such as **starostas**, and communicate those needs to the national and foreign aid providers. Finally, LSGs and civil society fulfil the representational function, as they advocate for the IDP-matters, support initiatives in proposal writing, design and implementation of the projects, and communicate with the public to decrease social tensions and foster trust.

### FUNCTIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO SUPPORT IDP NEEDS:

#### ► 1. ORGANIZING PROCESS FLOW AND COLLECTING NEEDS:

When someone registers as an IDP with their family, we immediately provide humanitarian aid, including cleaning supplies, food, clothing, and baby essentials. Afterwards, they apply for further assistance as an IDP, and if they have the necessary certificate, we offer help. ...We manage compensatory payment applications for around 600 property owners who offer free housing to nearly 2000 people

**Interview, LSG representative, Uman', 8.8.23**

#### ► 2. COMMUNICATION AND DATA COLLECTION FUNCTION:

When someone registers as an IDP with their family, we immediately provide humanitarian aid, including cleaning supplies, food, clothing, and baby essentials. Afterwards, they apply for further assistance as an IDP, and if they have the necessary certificate, we offer help. ...We manage compensatory payment applications for around 600 property owners who offer free housing to nearly 2000 people

**Interview, LSG representative, Uman', 8.8.23**

#### ► 3. ADVOCATING FOR IDP NEEDS:

Local self-governance bodies play a pivotal coordinating role between various charitable foundations, community organizations, and volunteer initiatives. They often act as intermediaries to identify beneficiaries and narrow beneficiary categories. For instance, when working with specific groups like people with disabilities, these bodies are essential in aiding our efforts.

**Representative of a CSO supporting IDPs, FG 2, 26.6.23**



**While these functions in their totality are widespread, the combination of them is rather rare.** Numerous interlocutors perceive coordination function as missing and expect LSGs to facilitate coordination to multiply the effect of individual efforts. In the focus groups with the NGOs, there was widespread disappointment with the lack of initiative, openness, and support by the LSGs, with few exceptions. Some even perceived LSG in their municipality as competitive towards CSOs' initiatives. Given that coordination of IDP-related issues is not a compulsory function of local authorities, even though most stakeholders expect it from them, our interlocutors highlighted the critical role of individuals in the LSGs, who carry out these functions voluntarily, in addition to their regular work.

## National and subnational authorities

Constructive stakeholder collaboration to solve IDP issues is one of the principles for the national IDP Strategy as at least five ministries (Ministry for Social Policy, Ministry for Reintegration, Ministry for Infrastructure, Ministry for Economy, and Ministry for Digital Transformation (MinDigital)), all subnational and local authorities engage in the social support to IDPs (see Annex 3).

Therefore, the Ministry of Reintegration announced in April 2023 the creation of a **Coordination Headquarters for providing for the rights and freedoms of IDPs, which includes all relevant ministries, Regional Military Administrations (RMAs), and a representative of the Association of Ukrainian Cities**, meant to provide the voice of local self-government authorities. We are yet to see the results and assessments of this body's work (Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, 2023). Notably, interviewed local actors, except more experienced social policy managers, did not reflect on the role of this level.

The coordination function continues on the level of the Regional and District Military Administrations, **as they coordinate demand and supply for humanitarian goods or accommodation for IDPs on the (sub-)regional level** (Law on IDP rights, Art. 11). For this purpose, regional coordination councils are the tool of choice, also present in other regions (Congress of local and regional authorities, 2023a).

As a rule, communities pass the first-hand information to the regional level, where Regional Military Administrations (RMAs) have the overview of capacities and resources in all communities and moderates the distribution of goods and IDPs. Further, RMAs contribute to **capacity building** in the communities, which our interlocutors appreciate. In most cases, NGOs assessed RMAs as open and cooperative in situations in which they needed to collaborate.

Notably, different CSOs considered RMAs as influential, as they drive the work of the LSGs and ensure **accountability**. RMAs have audit and control competencies: LSGs report changes in the number of IDPs regarding the distribution of humanitarian goods, and RMAs provide recommendations. In addition, based on the interviews with LSGs, we also assume informal mechanisms of leverage between RMAs and LSGs in place (e.g. reputational); however exploring those was beyond the scope of this study. The function of ensuring accountability extends to the national level.

The Human Rights Ombudsman is the central body that conducts oversight of the conditions of IDPs through its envoys. The Ombudsman also contributes to the related institutional framework on the national level, as discussed in the previous section.

### EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS LOCAL STATE ADMINISTRATIONS

The FG interlocutors have the expectation that RMAs have the potential to bring the national strategy to the regional level, for example, in the form of a regional program. The assumption is that this would incentivize LSGs to also think strategically about IDP-related governance.

Representative of a CSO supporting IDPs, FG 2, 26.6.23

## Donors

Finally, the **stakeholders providing material resources not only have the function of maintaining the system but also contribute to its accountability, as they can incentivise transparency and leverage through conditionality.** Among the international donors, the interlocutors differentiated between the international funds and organizations providing large-scale support. Those rely on the conventional mechanisms of international assistance.

In contrast to this group of actors, our interlocutors highlighted the significance of partner communities and international businesses, assisting in a more flexible way. City partnerships and informal, personal acquaintances were vital to building a solid trust basis, which is critical in a crisis. Also, the private sector plays a key role in supporting the governance system: international and local businesses provide and renovate IDPs' housing in collective centers (Press and information team of the Delegation of Ukraine, 2022), provide food, and support LSGs with logistics. Local and relocated businesses create jobs for the IDPs.

### COOPERATION WITH UKRAINIAN BUSINESSES AND CITIES ABROAD

The informal dialogue platform with the businesses in Shpola was useful for coordinating provision and logistics around the food supply. A large food & agrotech company has provided frozen chicken meat, while another company provided refrigerators to store those goods, enabling their redistribution upon demand. The LSG interlocutors associate this responsiveness with the quality of a "socially responsible business," which they highlight as critical in managing the crisis.

(Interview, LSG representatives, Shpola, 4.8.23)

When the invasion started, Uman's city's partners from Lithuania made a call asking about the needs: They were not expecting any letters, as they visited us in 2021, and we knew each other personally. They just collected what was needed, arranged the logistics, and brought the goods.

Interview, LSG representative, Uman', 8.8.23

## 3. LOCAL DEMOCRACY PRINCIPLES

**Local democracy's core principles - participation, equity, and accountability proved useful in the governance of displacement-related issues. However, rather few communities and not the majority seem to rely on these principles when governing a crisis. This section presents the mechanisms behind it.**

### Participation

The right of IDPs to **participate in local democracy**<sup>10</sup> has been a subject of unresolved legal debate since the first wave of displacement in 2014 and remains disputable now. On the one hand, the Law on IDP rights guarantees them the same rights as the citizens of Ukraine (Art. 14 on non-discrimination), which can reasonably be extended to using local democracy mechanisms equally with other community residents.

On the other hand, because there is no legal definition of "community resident"<sup>11</sup>, IDPs risk exclusion from local democracy if local authorities interpret their constituency in a narrow sense as only covering permanent residents. To resolve this issue, some local authorities included IDPs in their statute's definition for "community residents" (United Voices in Action, 2023), while a Draft Law No. 7283<sup>12</sup> that would provide a unified definition is in the making.

To support IDP engagement in the community's decision-making beyond elections, the national Strategy explicitly highlights consultative bodies to promote adequate communication between IDPs and local authorities or NGOs ("IDP Councils"). This aligns with the Council of Europe's recommendation (Hollinger & Sienkevych, n.d.)<sup>13</sup>.

As a follow-up, the Government adopted a template of an IDP Council provision, which is mandatory for local state administrations and recommended for local self-government<sup>14</sup>. An international NGO advocating the template assumes opening

an opportunity for dialogue between IDPs & their NGOs and authorities that have been closed for IDP participation (Unity for Action, n.d.). Those IDPs among our respondents who are a part of such Council consider them useful, while others raised legitimacy concerns behind such a council in their community “I have no idea how it was created or how they found these advisors and representatives of civil society in our community. Communication about it would be appropriate and effective,” - one IDP reflects (Representative of a displaced NGO, FG 3, 27.6.23)

Considering various other participation practices — from informing to consulting, dialogue, and partnership - the depth and extent of involvement of different stakeholders in solving issues of displacement vary locally.

A survey of local self-governance authorities (LSGs) in the first year of the full-scale Russian invasion finds that most of the respondents (85%) engaged external stakeholders to solve issues of IDPs, such as finding accommodation or providing humanitarian aid (Figure 2 below).

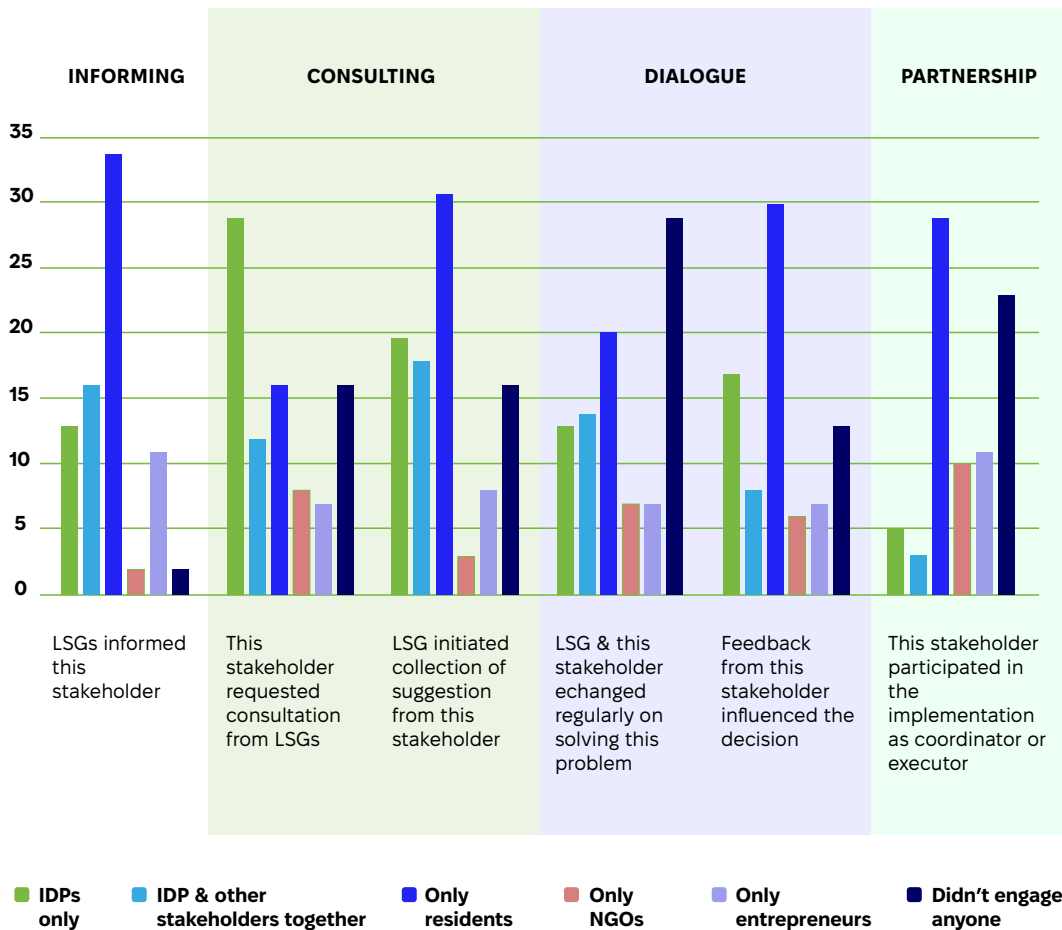
While IDPs proactively request that LSGs consult with them regarding their matters (in almost 30 of 113 municipalities), they are rarely involved in the implementation of solutions - which may be because they as individuals do not have the necessary resources. Entrepreneurs, interestingly, are quite involved - even slightly more than NGOs - in the implementation of solutions for IDPs.

These findings of limited IDP engagement corroborate with the perceptions of the NGOs they shared in our focus groups: One NGO working with IDPs reflects:

In our community, despite active engagement from various groups and individuals, there hasn't been any effort to coordinate our work. Instead, there's competition, and the local self-government body believes they are the best. This overlooks the needs of the people currently residing here.

**Representative of a CSO supporting IDPs, FG 2, 26.6.23**

Residents, however, seem to be the group that LSGs relying on participatory practices are most likely to involve. This indicates bottom-up volunteers being active in solving IDP issues.



**Fig. 2: Stakeholder engagement for IDP issues**

**Note: n = 113:** Municipalities of up to 100,000 residents in liberated or rear areas who have had public participation or transparency initiatives to solve problems of IDPs. Problems surveyed included providing IDPs with food and necessary items, providing accommodation, integrating IDPs and psychological support. Only one critical issue could be selected. "IDPs & other stakeholders together" shows only the most popular, not all possible combinations of stakeholders.

**Source:** based on data for (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, 2023a)

## Equity

The participation of the IDPs is closely connected to the issue of equity and views on the ideal outcomes of integration. There are several ways how stakeholders think of an IDP's integration: For some, it is a comfortable constellation when different social groups exist in parallel while going for the risk of ghettoisation and stigmatisation.

For others, it is ideal when IDPs fully take on local ways of living while increasing the risks of clashes and the creation of parallel structures operating in the shadow. The most sustainable and most difficult goal to reach is the balance resulting in **social cohesion** – when locals accept the peculiarities of newcomers, and there is sufficient space for exchange to deliberate about different ways of living and accepting those.

**“It’s about helping people to remain themselves under new circumstances”,** — according to an academic researcher in Ukraine, Oksana Dashchakivska (2.8.23).

### IDP’S VIEWS ON INTEGRATION WAYS AND OUTCOMES

The whole “IDP” acronym isn’t very comforting to me. In my view, it should be a person with an IDP certificate. I have so many identities, not just IDP, and it’s overwhelming. I’m concerned about discrimination, particularly regarding the IDP Councils.

On the one hand, it’s great for amplifying the voices of a minority trying to integrate. On the other hand, maybe it makes sense to integrate these councils with the community’s or the military administration’s public councils.

To foster social cohesion between temporarily displaced individuals due to war and local activists, it might be useful to create convergence among the advisory bodies. We could network and find allies among Cherkasy’s activists. I’ve lived here almost a year, and to us Cherkasy residents, there’s no need for separation.

**Representative of a displaced NGO, FG 3, 27.6.23**

In practice, social cohesion in the communities is greatly associated with equity practices in IDP-related issues. For example, humanitarian aid can become the subject of conflict in a community if local citizens are aside. Good examples of preventing conflict provided regular possibilities for the local residents to obtain humanitarian aid. Also, providing adequate support to the locals who lost their houses but are formally not IDPs requires creative solutions.

To reach equity, some communities adjust their language to IDPs when discussing the “new citizens of hromada<sup>15</sup>,” or “community residents with the IDP permit.”

As an outcome, social cohesion reduces conflict potential through recognizing the “otherness” and trying to accommodate the differences. The accommodating dialogue releases the potential of social capital and innovation for unique solutions necessary in a crisis. Finally, social cohesion increases legitimacy. And the more people recognize a decision, the less effort, and resources it requires to implement it. (Expert interview, 2.8.23).

## Accountability

Given war-related limitations to conventional accountability mechanisms, some local public authorities proactively seek to increase the trust of their partners. Some authority representatives perceived the conventional audits by the Regional Military Administrations (RMAs), which they perform as entities overseeing support for IDPs locally (Law on IDP Rights, Art. 11), as a constructive way of suggesting improvements.

Besides, the positive assessment based on the rigorous audit of the IDP's conditions by the Human Rights Representative or the National Social Service Agency removes the ground for those trying to undermine local self-governance and proves the critical role of communities for resilience. Other authorities use the strategy of proactive transparency and communication to design the trust of international partners and locals. This corroborates the perceptions voiced by some CSO representatives who see **LSGs as the "bridges of trust" between the IDPs and assistance providers.**

#### LSGS' PURSUIT OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

It wasn't just a one-time collaboration [with an international organization]. We maintained a partnership in a sense. We've proven ourselves as a trustworthy and responsive community. Thus, they want to continue working with us, as it is important to showcase qualities people can rely on. Based on this reputation, others heard about us and contacted us proactively, and we began a close collaboration.

LSG representative, Shpola, interview, 4.8.2

## 4. TOOLS FOR INTEGRATION

### Local strategies and programs

**When analyzing viable solutions to the problems associated with displacement, four categories of tools and practices turned out as important: local strategies and programs, spaces, digital media, and social entrepreneurship.**

Those local self-government authorities (LSGs), whom our respondents assessed positively, indicated that local-level programs for IDPs were critical to increasing staff and allocating necessary resources for the IDPs' needs. Departments that work on IDP, use programs to advocate and convince the local council to dedicate a specific budget for the related work.

#### EXAMPLE OF AN IDP INTEGRATION PROGRAM

Uman' City Council adopted a comprehensive IDP integration program developed by its employment and economic development departments with the support of the U-LEAD with Europe. It contains an evidence-based assessment of the state of IDP integration in the community, their needs and challenges. Noteworthy is that IDP integration is linked to the community's development goals and includes three main components: accommodation, education and employment, and participation in community life, including the development of its cultural and tourist potential<sup>17</sup>.

**LSGs may also incorporate IDPs as a vulnerable group into existing social policies on the local level or treat them as locals.** This means that if they are considered a vulnerable group, they receive the same social services as the residents, and if their income is sufficient according to governmental standards, they wouldn't be eligible for additional support.

These two approaches are usually criticized: the first one sometimes includes limitations on the duration of residence, which may exclude newly arrived IDPs, while the second approach may discriminate against relatively well-off individuals who nevertheless need orientation or mental health support (Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, 2023).

## Spaces

Given the complex nature of the IDP support ecosystem, spaces of stakeholders' encounters – physical and discursive – play a significant role. These spaces serve many different purposes simultaneously. Some communities arranged coordination headquarters to support those arriving for the first time. These were the spaces of the first encounter. If arranged efficiently, IDPs could receive basic humanitarian aid, register and receive an IDP certificate entitling them to support further, obtain information about accommodation, provide contacts to enter relevant social media groups for further virtual coordination, etc.

Proper organization of such **coordination headquarters** has been important, especially in managing the crisis of the first days of the war, but they remain critical as the Russian intensive war of aggression is ongoing.

Further, **humanitarian hubs** are more permanent spaces for the IDPs, LSGs, volunteers, and donors. Different organizations use those to provide not only humanitarian support but also nonformal education, language courses, childcare, social activities, and psychological care. Some spaces, such as Hata-Hub, were created out of the pre-war **chain of support centers**, while others, such as one-stop-shop “eHub<sup>16</sup>” by “яМаріуполь” (**IMariupol, n.d.**) was organized as a chain anew, mainly in the larger cities.

Some of the hubs extended their services to legal consultations and employment support. However, many interlocutors highlighted the present demand in the dedicated spaces for psychological and medical support, not only for IDPs but also for the locals and veterans.

Another category of spaces is collective centers called **“compact living spaces” (Mistsya kompaktnoho poselennya, MKP)**. MKPs are spaces of collective housing for IDPs like dormitories, sanatoriums, and sometimes even kindergartens and schools. As a rule, these spaces were repurposed and often required substantial renovations for living. IDP initiatives often arise from the everyday challenges of these spaces' maintenance. Small gardening and farming around those households evolved, especially in the rural areas, which enables self-sustaining. At the same time, MKPs are potential spaces of conflict.



As a rule, people who live there are economically vulnerable, and even with subsidies, they cannot afford to rent proper accommodation. Because of such a precarious economic situation for the residents, an additional strain from the lack of private space in the centers and the typically remote location, this accommodation can hinder integration, fragment communities, and exacerbate social tensions.

Thus, the discursive spaces dedicated to meeting each other, arguing, and advocating are critical to accompany the social integration process. Consultative bodies (**e.g. IDP councils**) are one of the formats providing such a space. Some of our interlocutors participated in such dedicated consultative bodies and perceived them as useful. Others highlighted the questionable legitimacy of those councils, especially if local organizations that support IDPs were not engaged.

Although the usefulness of the IDP councils is debated, their existence, especially in the communities where local authorities are reserved and not responsive in communication, can be the only opportunity to advocate for the IDP's needs.

**Educational and cultural projects** are another type of discursive space. They provide opportunities to communicate grievances and concerns, exchange about each other's norms, and make implicit assumptions explicit. Some consider culture an indispensable platform for social cohesion (Dashchakivska, n.d.), while others consider cultural projects inappropriate in the war.

Cultural events, especially in small communities, require a high degree of sensitivity to the context, as they are often disputed. These critics, however, align with the narrow interpretation of the culture as mass concerts, while the broader one includes art therapy, guided tours for the IDPs to present the new community, and diverse ways of presenting local history and customs.

#### PHYSICAL AND DISCURSIVE SPACES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENCOUNTERS:

We work directly with IDPs, as well as in compact living places. Through our organization, we've established a free space called 'Hata HUB.' This location serves as our daily activity hub, including interactions with IDPs.

##### Representative of a CSO supporting IDPs, FG 2, 26.6.23

Our spaces greatly differ from similar humanitarian hubs that offer assistance. It's more about creating a family-like, cosy environment with a high level of comfort. IDP status wasn't our choice. Various people with diverse needs require aid. It's not that someone is inactive and needs help; it's because they, along with their children, have become hostages to the situation. The initial and ongoing support prevents them from feeling lost. This is about bonding, ongoing support, and eventual reintegration for urban rebuilding.

##### Representative of the network IMariupol, FG 4, 30.6.23

The Coordination Council on Ensuring the Rights and Guarantees for IDPs was created in Cherkasy on 23 February 2023. Its main task is stakeholder coordination with other authorities and non-governmental entities, including private enterprises, for implementing the local and national IDP policies. Its decisions are advisory, while the head of the council (deputy mayor) calls its meetings when necessary<sup>18</sup>.

These **physical and discursive spaces nourish the ecosystem by extending, testing and strengthening the networks**: IDPs obtain a chance to integrate, and other stakeholders use the projects to deepen the collaboration, evolve a common ground, and improve the understanding of each other.

These are also spaces of the encounter between the global and local. In most cases, in addition to the local volunteers, other countries, international donors, and foreign businesses are involved. These are nodal points to circulate information and local knowledge, analyze material demand and supply, and communicate and adjust social expectations and cultural differences.

There is a critical **need for the support of those spaces**. The discursive spaces need support to educate professional facilitators to moderate sensitive encounters with local cultures perceived as different. Most interlocutors highlighted the lack of social workers and psychologists. Safety is the prior concern for the physical spaces in the ongoing war. Ensuring bomb shelters, maintaining physical infrastructure, and arranging basic comfort for social encounters are those needs that often fall short and compete with other urgent needs.

Some volunteers maintaining those spaces were missing relevant funding lines (e.g. ensuring barrier-free access for people with disabilities and making the building inclusive, payments for water, electricity, heating, and shelters) in the related donor's projects. This is, however, the necessary contribution to resilience and social cohesion.

## Digital tech

Digital technologies are critical to governance in Ukraine, as they fulfil many functions simultaneously. First, social media provides the continuation of the discursive spaces. Most of the **deliberation** around the governance issues occurs in the different Messenger, Telegram, and Viber groups. The use of chatbots is very widespread. These are used to ensure **structured information** for survey purposes, for example, to analyze the skills of IDPs to support the search for jobs. As an example, the State Service of Ethnopolitics (<https://dessa.gov.ua/>) provided the chatbot "TypБOТa нpo BΠO" ([https://t.me/chat\\_bot\\_vpo\\_bot](https://t.me/chat_bot_vpo_bot)) (transl. "Care for IDPs") for the collection of a clickable link to categorized useful info.

Facebook is the most popular platform that is used by communities and citizens as **an accountability forum**: The communities that want to proactively build trust choose their Facebook page rather than an official website to inform citizens on an everyday basis. Local authorities analyze Facebook discussions as one of the prominent indicators of public opinion. Some communities have the additional purpose of informing the foreign supporters and thus post relevant information to show how the provided goods have been used.

Digital platforms support **coordination**. Prozorro.sale digital auction platform extended its tools and services since the Russian full-scale invasion to assist the **relocation of businesses**. Prozorro.sale is a dedicated market platform to reach the best ratio between the demand and supply following the auction logic.

When the businesses announce their relocation via the platform, this information appears on a marketplace, and communities can compete to host the businesses.

The fact that communities receive 60% of the personal income tax and the tax is allocated based on the place of business registration, communities have an incentive to provide favorable conditions and compete for businesses and organizations with employees.

Finally, **e-governance**, based on the electronic exchange of data through the Trembita system of interoperability, ensures the exchange of information between the state registers, while the Diia government app for administrative services and physical Administrative Service Centers (ASCs) (ЦНАП) support easy registration of relocated physical and legal persons.

On the one hand, special payments depend on this IDP's registrations. On the other hand, the registration data contributes to **evidence-based policymaking** on the local and national levels. For example, the communities can better estimate the number of teachers or doctors they need, depending on the number of newcomers.

#### DIGITAL EMPLOYMENT AS A PRIORITY

Our focus as a public organization is currently on programs that enable people to learn remote work skills. This way, they can earn a living through phones, laptops, and computers without competing for traditional jobs. I believe this holds significant potential; teaching people remote work and providing them with new skills can become the norm for everyone

Representative of an IDP initiative, FG 1, 26.6.23

## Social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is a promising trend in Ukraine, which can help address systemic economic issues while positively impacting society. For example, in about 1,000 identified social enterprises in Ukraine, most of their employees are youth (69%) and women (54%) (Kamenko, 2020). The most famous project since 2015 is **Veterano Pizza**, started by a veteran and employing veterans.

In addition to the important **economic empowerment** of IDPs (see the example in the box below), social entrepreneurship projects sustain **innovation potential**. The crises require creative solutions to the problems, while standard solutions often fail. Social enterprises generate and test ideas by using local knowledge practices and understanding the demand and supply on the micro-level.

Moreover, in contrast to conventional humanitarian help, social entrepreneurship provides the ground, the tools, and the knowledge for sustainable economic income, which also **maintains the dignity** of displaced people and prevents their stigmatisation.

Although social entrepreneurship is not new to Ukraine, relatively few stakeholders were driving this trend strategically before the full-scale invasion. The Ukrainian Social Venture Fund (USVF) works with startup incubators and supports the best teams and projects with seed funding. Future Development Agency (FDA) builds the capacities of social entrepreneurs and consults local authorities on supporting social entrepreneurship through dedicated programs.

There are rather few municipalities that recognize the potential of social entrepreneurship and sustain that. For example, only Vinnytsia and Ivano-Frankivsk cities had programs for the development of social entrepreneurship, but they did not re-launch them after the begin of the full-scale invasion.

At the same time, our interlocutors see that in the near future, most businesses in Ukraine will be impact-driven, as the war massively triggered the sense of purpose. Given the experimental and sporadic character of the projects supporting social entrepreneurship and their strategic value in protracted crises triggered by the war, there is a need to support related communities of practice.

### SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

USVF supported the project “Vilni” (transl. Free) involving displaced women in Western Ukraine who lacked digital skills and job opportunities. The founder organized a four-week training program to teach these women knitting.

They crafted socks with QR-coded stories about their displacement, selling for around 350–380 hryvnias per pair. This endeavour allowed them to earn up to UAH 7000 (ca. 170 EUR) monthly and created a support network of 200 women. The project expanded to include hats, scarves, and mittens, exporting to cold countries, catering to corporate orders, and providing vital community support.

Interview, USVF co-founder, 7.8.23

## 5. IMPLICATIONS FOR DONOR'S WORK

**The Institutional framework for IDP integration provides the ground for an ecosystem** of stakeholders with overlapping functions located at different geographical and social distances from IDPs. While it may seem confusing or inefficient, such **redundancy can support resilience** in times of war-triggered crises because IDPs will have several alternative ways of receiving support.

Moreover, thanks to decentralization reform, LSGs have sufficient leeway to experiment with **social innovation** to produce **context-sensitive** solutions and economic and political incentives to strive for successful IDP integration. To sustain the ability of the ecosystem to adjust to potential new shocks, technical and financial assistance should consider the following:

- ▶ Despite the tendency to develop unified solutions, such as IDP integration programs or IDP councils, a critical step before advocating them for a community is a thorough **analysis of the existing local IDP integration practices**. It is possible that a target community already has experimental initiatives in place that should be supported instead.
- ▶ **When efficiency (cost-saving) risks hampering resilience (the ability to function despite external shocks), donor programs should prioritise resilience**, considering that Ukraine continues to resist the Russian invasion. In practice, it means, when supporting spaces – investment in redundant systems of energy supply, mobile connection and bomb shelters as part of support programs; setting barrier-free principle as a standard for all infrastructure investment to account for the increasing number of people with reduced mobility; mental health support programs for CSOs as well as public officials should be viewed as necessary components of capacity-building activities; institutional funding for NGOs (rent, utilities' cost) should be viewed as means to ensure the resilience of critical nodal points in the ecosystem of IDP integration. Finally, programs to support social entrepreneurship should be viewed as a means for inducing self-sufficiency skills for the target groups rather than inducing immediate economic gains.
- ▶ Donors should use their leverage to **enable coordination between local stakeholders (LSGs, civil society, local entrepreneurs) and relevant executive authorities**. Coordination is necessary to decrease overlaps, cover gaps and mitigate conflicts of authority, which otherwise can hamper the capacities of decentralized service provision systems. Especially where mayors or other levels of authority are closed to public engagement, donors convening the meetings and elucidating mutual commitments can open ways for coordination.

- ▶ **Policies for IDPs' social integration should aim for social cohesion** because it would support community resilience in the war, i.e. the goal is not simply to reduce tensions but to enhance collaboration for the common goal of resistance to armed aggression. For donors, it means incorporating considerations of equity and justice between the host community and newcomers when designing support programs. For example, some programs can be opened to all people of a certain group (e.g. social entrepreneurs or schoolchildren) rather than only IDPs or humanitarian aid can be provided to all people in need, but more frequently for IDPs. Support programs should differentiate IDPs by monitoring their needs and capacities through regular data collection and user feedback.
- ▶ Donors should support the emerging **collaborative governance not only as a problem-solving approach but also as a tool for trust-building**. Authorities recognized that IDPs, residents and other non-governmental stakeholders could be partners with expertise and resources to solve policy problems. Through collaboration, stakeholders can demonstrate **trustworthiness**, i.e., predictability and transparency. In doing so, they invoke social accountability mechanisms (directly to stakeholders) that can partially offset electoral accountability in generating legitimacy and trust. Therefore, donor support should enable physical and discursive spaces (hubs, co-creation spaces, coordination meetings and councils) and support the communicative efforts of critical local stakeholders (LSGs, CSOs) by providing communication and facilitation training.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1. Methodology

We conducted a **qualitative case study of IDP support ecosystems on the local level of governance** as viewed by civil society organizations (CSOs), including IDP initiatives and local self-government authorities. **Cherkaska oblast was selected as a typical case** of internal displacement as a serious policy challenge despite a relatively low proportion of hosted IDPs in relation to all IDPs (1%) (“Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 13 (11 May - 14 June 2023),” 2023).

By about the same time since the first Russian invasion and occupation of Crimea, in 2015, most IDPs settled in three regions in the east of Ukraine so that the regions to the west of Poltavaska and Dnipropetrovsk oblast did not feel significant pressure to develop systematic integration measures: there, the number of new arrivals barely made it to 1% of oblast inhabitants, which was also the case for Cherkasy oblast (OCHA, 2015). In 2023, however, the number of IDPs is equivalent to at least 10% of pre-invasion oblast population. The situation is similar to another 10 oblasts who host proportionally not many IDPs (up to 1%) but lack previous experience with the displacement as a policy issue.

Moreover, cities in Cherkasy report the number of IDPs that is equivalent to 10% of their population<sup>19</sup> (“The Number of Immigrants Is Increasing in Cherkasy,” 2023)<sup>20</sup>, of which corresponds to the general trend whereby IDPs prefer to settle in urban areas.

**The data was collected** using a focus group and interview techniques, topped up with desk research for triangulation and reviewing the legal and administrative framework. Over June-August 2023, we spoke to **we spoke to 41 people in total (reached out to 46)** in total (reached out to 41). Specifically, we conducted **five focus groups with 28 people from 23 organizations**: IDP-led initiatives (FG1, seven initiatives, including one in a collective center), NGOs who support IDPs (FG2, seven organizations), relocated NGOs (FG3, five organizations), members of a national network for IDP support with broad regional coverage (FG4, five regional representations), and NGOs who support IDPs in Dnipropetrovska oblast<sup>21</sup> to infer how different might the experiences be in our focal region (FG5, 2 organizations).

As a rule, one representative joined per organization, except in FG3 and FG4, where two representatives per organization or branch joined. Geographically, most focus group participants operated in Cherkasy (ten participants), followed by Uman’ (four people), regionally in Cherkasy oblast (three organizations), Chyhyryn (two people), Smila (one person) and Kaniv (one person); one representative of the national network did not specify their location. One participant per city joined from Zaporizhzhia and Kropyvnytskyi, and two - from Kyiv.

Among the relocated NGOs, they arrived from Donetska, Luhanska, Kharkivska and Khersonska oblasts; for two organizations, this is their second relocation.

**Focus group scripts** consisted of three parts: first, we asked the participants to prioritise issues faced by IDPs, which we summarized from desk research. While prioritising, the participants gave examples and their own assessments of the severity of these issues. Toward the end of the first part, participants agreed on the most significant issue to move to solutions.

During the second part, we asked participants to reflect on the role of stakeholders, whom we predefined, in solving the most pressing issue they collectively defined and ranked the stakeholders in terms of importance, proximity to IDPs and effectiveness; suggested stakeholders that our list was missing. We encouraged giving illustrations while responding.

In the third and final part, we asked participants was the support they needed to continue their operations as NGOs and initiatives. We used a digital collaboration board for the live visualisation of focus group discussions.

We also conducted six in-depth interviews: expert interviews with a representative of the ombudsman and of an international donor; respondent interviews with three representatives of local self-government authorities in municipalities under or equal to 80,000 in Cherkaska oblast, and one representative of IDP-supporting NGO in Vynnytska oblast for exploratory purposes. Interview scripts mostly resemble focus groups, where we inquired about problems and solutions from a speaker's perspective; in expert interviews, we also sought advice regarding blind spots in the system governing IDP support.

The data was transcribed and analyzed using qualitative text analysis software MAXQDA for systematic coding to map IDP support ecosystems in respective locations, as viewed by NGOs and initiatives. We used a mixed deductive-inductive coding: while high-level themes were predefined (e.g. types of problems, types of stakeholders), functions in the support ecosystem or use of local democracy mechanisms were derived inductively from the speakers' reflections.

## Annex 2. State social policies summary

There are several **cash assistance schemes by the government and international humanitarian organizations**. Upon registration, IDPs can receive a monthly allowance (UAH 2000 standard, UAH 3000 for children and persons with disability)<sup>22</sup>, although from 1 September 2023 this aid to people who can afford UAH100,000+ expenses or own property outside the area of hostilities will be stopped.

The duration of this assistance is capped at 12 months (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, n.d.). Through an **eHelp (eDopomoga)**, IDPs are eligible to apply for **additional monthly allowances** (UAH 2200 monthly) from international organizations who partnered with the Ministry for social policy, such as UNICEF, Red Cross, ACTED, Norwegian Refugee Council and IOM; prioritisation rules are set by organizations who coordinate to avoid duplication ("eDopomoga," n.d.). The state also tries to foster **mutual aid** by creating a marketplace of needs and donors ("Social eDopomoga," n.d.).



Any **state social payments or benefits continue** despite the martial law, while alternative ways of receiving pensions have been envisaged (“Internally Displaced Persons, n.d.). IDPs, as other Ukrainians in difficult life conditions, are also eligible for a **housing subsidy**, which they can apply via a new, simplified digital procedure (Diia app or electronic cabinet on the Pension Fund website or app)<sup>23</sup>. Notably, IDPs can apply for a subsidy for their de-facto residence, without a registration (“Housing Subsidies for Internally Displaced Persons,” 2022).

**The state declares a set of guarantees for accommodation and commits to social housing.** IDPs have the right to be provided by state executive authorities, local self-government and private entities with the possibility of **free temporary residence for 6 months** if IDPs cover utilities’ costs (Para. 8 Part 1. Art. 9 of the Law on IDP rights). Vulnerable groups of IDPs and employees of relocated enterprises are eligible for **prioritized allocation** of free temporary housing (item 5 of Regulation on housing pools)<sup>24</sup>.

Against a backdrop of large-scale displacement, there are about 4,000 collective centers hosting ca. 100,000 people (with the capacity to accept up to 500,000 people in 7,000 centers), but the Strategy envisages **gradual closure of the collective centers** by offering their residents alternative accommodation options with more privacy<sup>25</sup>.

**There are also attempts to encourage private arrangements of housing.** First, to incentivize **local hosts to offer free accommodation to IDPs**, the Ministry of Reintegration compensates the hosts with UAH 450/month per hosted IDP. Local authorities accept applications in paper form or email, aggregate and transmit them to RMA, which sends the requested budget to the Ministry. Local authorities may visit properties to check if IDPs live at a stated address. The Government decides on payments<sup>26</sup>. Second, there is a program by a German Development Bank KfW with the State Fund for Support of Youth Housing Construction for **low-interest housing loans** for IDPs (“Improving access to housing for internally displaced persons...,” 2022).

The Government defined the prioritisation algorithm for the allocation of free temporary accommodation but put local self-government in charge of implementing the scheme. LSGs organize temporary “housing pools”, find funds for them and process applications. Local authorities may develop and reconstruct (municipal) residential housing, repurpose municipal social real estate (hostels, clinics) or turn non-resident property into resident buildings<sup>27</sup>. Ministry for Infrastructure allocates **subsidies to local self-government budgets for the construction or renovation of temporary housing for IDPs**<sup>28</sup>.

**There are several state-level measures to ensure income in new locations** (Oliynyk, 2023). The Strategy emphasises the development of **entrepreneurial potential and support for relocated businesses**, including capacity building.

The Ministry of Economy enables employment for IDPs and other affected groups through its State Employment Service<sup>29</sup>. Specifically, IDPs should register in local SES centers to receive employment counselling<sup>30</sup>; job offers are available on the Unified Job Portal (“Unified Job Portal,” n.d.).

Also, SES **compensates social security expenses** at a rate of UAH 6700 for 2 months to firms who employ IDPs through the Diia app<sup>31</sup>. Since June 2022 the Ministry of Economy has provided job creation grants (50,000 - 250,000 UAH) to micro and small enterprises as well as for greenhouses, gardens and processing plants, to be applied for via Diia and administered by SES (“Grant for Own Business,” n.d.); (“The government program of non-refundable grants for the creation and development of one’s own business,” n.d.)<sup>32</sup>. In 2023, relocated small and micro enterprises are eligible for one-time grants from the German Development Bank (KfW) via IOM (IOM Grant Program for War-Affected Micro and Small Enterprises in Ukraine, 2023).

### Annex 3. Legal-administrative framework and the formal roles of state and self-government authorities for IDP policies

GOVERNANCE LEVEL	TYPE OF STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	TYPICAL ACTIVITIES
<b>EXECUTIVE STATE AUTHORITIES &amp; ADMINISTRATIONS</b>			
Central	<b>Ministry for Social Policy</b>	Defines IDP-related social policies Sets social service standards Oversees State Pension Fund Fundraises	Maintains IDP register Aggregates needs for social allowances Oversees network of social service centers Oversees payouts of pensions & state social payments, subsidies Negotiates with international humanitarian organizations
	<b>Ministry for Reintegration</b>	Responsible for protection of IDP rights Defines evacuation/relocation procedures	Ensuring coordination between stakeholders Administers compensations for IDP hosts Organizes evacuation of people & businesses
	<b>Ministry for Infrastructure</b>	Administers implementation of the state housing policy towards IDPs	Provides subsidies to LSGs & local state administrations for construction/renovation of social housing for IDPs Negotiates with international donors on financing housing

	<b>Ministry for Economy</b>	Defines policies to enable IDPs to generate income	Maintains network of state employment service (SES) centers Provides social insurance subsidies for employers of relocated people Provides grants to micro & small enterprises and for founding of gardens, greenhouses & processing enterprises
	<b>Ministry for Digital Transformation (MinDigital)</b>	Administers Diia portal & app Ensures government data circulation in the backend	Simplified processing of housing subsidies via automation of data exchange among state registers to check person's eligibility
Regional	<b>Regional and District State (Military) Administrations (RMA&amp;DMA)</b>	Ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration &amp; informing IDPs of housing options</li> <li>Provision of humanitarian, medical, psychological aid, food</li> <li>Coordination of territorial stakeholders</li> </ul>	Aggregate data/information about needs & options for housing Set up intergovernmental coordination spaces Maintain humanitarian aid warehouses, hubs Coordinate with LSG for aid distribution & social housing allocation Fundraise among international donors Audit subordinate departments & local self-government
	<b>LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT</b>		
	<b>Regional and Rayon Councils</b>	<b>Coordinate territorial stakeholders*</b>	<b>Facilitate multi-stakeholder platform (e.g. Rivne Regional Council on IDPs)</b>
Local	<b>Municipal councils &amp; their executive bodies</b>	Delegated authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register IDPs</li> <li>Maintain social housing for IDPs</li> <li>Provide social services for defined vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<b>Delegated authority:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure registration service in ASC</li> <li>Identify objects &amp; land for (re)construction of housing, conduct construction work &amp; maintenance</li> <li>Provide social housing, incl. maintenance of collective centers</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Guarantee basic education</li> <li>◦ Own authority:</li> <li>◦ Organize socio-economic integration of IDPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Organize placement in (pre-)schools</li> <li>◦ Ensure care for orphans, placement of foster homes, medical care</li> </ul> <p><b>Own authority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Conduct social support programs with extra services, food packages</li> <li>◦ Set up economic integration measures: entrepreneurship support centers, benefits for relocated firms</li> <li>◦ Organize cultural integration opportunities &amp; sports events</li> </ul> <p>Set up mental health centers</p> <p>Set IDP Councils &amp; other participatory instruments</p>
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**Note:** the table contains critical state and self-government stakeholders for solving most pressing issues faced by IDPs (accommodation, employment).

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## ENDNOTES

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- 11** Literally: "territorial community member".
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- 13** F. Foster and facilitate IDPs’ participation in public and political life by establishing consultative bodies and/or by creating spaces for associations of IDPs to communicate with councilors, NGOs etc. and by protecting them from intimidation and violence which would impede their voting rights.
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- 15** IDP Integration program in Uman territorial community in 2023-2025, p. 78 (provided to the authors).
- 16** Program for Integrating IDPs in Uman Territorial Community for 2023-2025 (in Ukrainian). Provided to the authors by the city administration.
- 17** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/263656111010553>.
- 18** Regulation on the Coordination Council for ensuring the rights and guarantees for IDPs in Cherkasy, provided to the authors by the city administration. It was created by the decision of the executive committee.
- 19** Own calculation based on data from IOM Round 13 (June 2023) and statistical information
- 20** Cherkasy: 27,000 IDPs, Cherkasy population ca. 286,000, own calculation based on reporting by the DMA Head; Uman’, Shpola - based on estimation of interviewees from among local authorities.
- 21** Dnipropetrovska oblast hosts 12% of IDPs, the second largest number after Kharkivska oblast (IOM, 2023, p. 2). We attempted to organize an interview with an NGO representative from Kharkivska oblast as well but did not receive a response. For exploratory purposes, the information obtained from Dnipro-based NGOs was sufficient.
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- 25** Operational Activity Plan of the Strategy, item 11: Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 312-p On the approval of the Strategy of the state policy on internal displacement for the period until 2025 and the approval of the operational plan of measures for its implementation in 2023-2025 (2023) Parliament of Ukraine Official Web Portal. Available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/312-2023-%D1%80#top> (Accessed: 20 August 2023).
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- 27** Provision of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 495 On some measures for the formation of housing funds intended for temporary residence of internally displaced persons (2022) Parliament of Ukraine Official Web Portal. Available at: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/495-2022-%D0%BF#n10> (Accessed: 20 August 2023).
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