


















Peace and Stabilisation Programme, Ukraine (PSPU)

Key results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened institutions and mechanisms that provide community security and justice, increasing social cohesion and propensity for reconciliation and, thereby, addressing conflict potential. - Strengthened contribution of civil society to promoting the resilience of conflict affected and vulnerable groups - Strengthened defence reform leading to enhanced AFU effectiveness, compatibility with NATO standards and ability to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and contribute to international security - Trust built between people divided by the contact line through dialogue and discreet joint work that addresses common challenges on both sides of the contact line as well as in the Black Sea, thereby complementing and enhancing the formal peace process. Justification for support: <i>The programme will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate Denmark's continued commitment to supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and movement towards European structures and values – human rights, non-discrimination and gender equality in particular. - Contribute to mitigating the most damaging effects of the conflict on local communities, exclusion and discrimination of the most disadvantaged groups including on women and youth. - Strengthen community security and social cohesion, two aspects highlighted in recent analysis as deficient in eastern Ukraine - Contribute to increasing the effectiveness of the Ukrainian armed forces to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity by enhancing operational effectiveness and interoperability with NATO and allies - Contribute grassroots ideas relating to peace Major risks and challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk of conflict escalation and/or increased instability due to multiple trigger points in eastern Ukraine - Risk of reduced momentum in the reform process, due to effect of vested interests, overall complexity, effect of economic recession, COVID-19 	File No.					
	Country	Ukraine				
	Responsible Unit					
	Sector	Stabilisation				
	<i>DKK mill.</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025	Tot.
	Commitment	50	33	48	33	164
	Projected ann.	50	33	48	33	164
	Duration	2022- 2025				
	Finance Act code.					
	Head of unit					
	Desk officer					
	Financial officer					
	Relevant SDGs [Maximum 5 – highlight with grey]					
						
	No Poverty	No Hunger	Good Health, Wellbeing	Quality Education	Gender Equality	Clean Water, Sanitation
						
	Affordable Clean Energy	Decent Jobs, Econ. Growth	Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure	Reduced Inequalities	Sustainable Cities, Communities	Responsible Consumption
						
	Climate Action	Life below Water	Life on Land	Peace & Justice, strong Inst.	Partnerships for Goals	

Strategic objective:

Improved social cohesion, security, justice, trust and state legitimacy, especially in eastern Ukraine, contributing to increasing stability in the region

Engagement	Partner	Total thematic budget:
1. Strengthened community security and social cohesion	UNDP	DKK 44million (ODA)
2. Strengthened contribution from civil society to resilience	Tbd	DKK 28 million (ODA)
3. Strengthened Security and Defence reform	Danish Defence Command	DKK 84 million (non-ODA)
4. Improved opportunities for Track 2 dialogue	Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue	DKK 2 + 2 million (ODA)
	Unallocated, TA	DKK 4.0 (ODA)
	Total	DKK 164 million

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Abbreviations

AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
ANP	NATO-Ukraine Annual National Plan
ATC	Amalgamated Territorial Community
CAB	Citizen Advice Bureau
C-IED	Counter Improvised Explosive Device
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSS	Centre for Safety and Security
CSWG	Community Security Working Group
DANEP	Danish Neighbourhood Programme
DCD	Defence Command Denmark
DMD	Danish Ministry of Defence
DMFA	Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DKK	Danish Kroner
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EUN	Department for European Neighbourhood (DMFA)
EU	European Union
EUAM	EU Assistance Mission
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCA	Government Controlled Area
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
JWGDR	Joint Working Group on Defence Reform
LSGB	Local Self Government Body
MTT	Mobile Training Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGCA	Non Government Controlled Area
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OCHA	(UN) Office for Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PARP	Performance and Review Process (PfP)
PfP	Partnership for Peace (NATO)
PG	Partnership Goal (PfP)
PSF	Peace and Stabilisation Fund
SDB	Strategic Defence Bulletin
SDC	Switzerland Development Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Assistance
SMM	(OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission
SO	Strategic Objective
SP	Service Provider
U-LEAD	Ukraine Local Empowerment Accountability and Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPSP	Ukraine Peace and Stabilisation Programme
WB	World Bank

1 Introduction

This Programme Document sets out the rationale and proposed structure for a new four-year programme of civilian and military stabilisation support to Ukraine through the Danish Peace and Stabilisation Fund (PSF). The overall objective of the support is *Improved social cohesion, security, justice, trust and state legitimacy, especially in eastern Ukraine, contributing to increasing stability in the region*. It builds on Denmark's current and previous diplomatic, stabilisation, and development support and has been designed to complement Denmark's other channels of support within an overall funding envelope of DKK 164 million between 2022-2025 (48 months). The programme builds upon the findings of several reviews of the existing stabilisation support (2018-2021), including the Mid Term Review in November 2020 which recommended a continuation, as well as reviews of UNDP's Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (RPP). The findings of the latter will be incorporated once the reports have been received in mid-August 2021. This multi-year approach thereby further strengthens Denmark's contribution to the international community's support to Ukraine following the 2014 Euromaidan revolution and the crisis in the east of the country and it reinforces Denmark's commitment to stability, good governance and human rights in Ukraine.

2 Strategic considerations and justification

2.1 Context for the programme

The context in eastern Ukraine is characterised by multiple political, economic, social and structural challenges, against which a large number of reform processes are underway, coupled with the national political and ideological shift towards Europe that is driven from Kyiv. The conflict in the east and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 stretched Ukraine's political, military and economic capacity, which has been further constrained since March 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, the continued application of the reforms in the east provides opportunities to entrench a conflict sensitive approach and address underlying stability factors thereby enhancing the region's recovery and longer-term resilience.¹

In February 2014, the Euromaidan Revolution (the "Revolution of Dignity") ushered in a more reform-friendly leadership, moving Ukraine closer to Europe. It enabled agreement on the EU Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. Cooperation with NATO on security and defence reforms intensified. In 2020 Ukraine was granted Enhanced Opportunity Partnership status with NATO, signifying a deeper level of dialogue and partnership.

Russia's illegal annexation of the Crimea and the continuation of the conflict in the eastern oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk adds a further dimension to the challenges facing Ukraine's security, stability and development. Reports suggest that up to 200,000 Russian passports have been issued to residents of the Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCAs). Russia's maritime inspection regime negatively affects shipping in the Azov Sea and presents a possible further conflict trigger point. COVID-19 has exacerbated existing hardships and inequalities that conflict-affected people face and increased disconnects between people in Donbas. In 2019, it was estimated that some 3.2 million people lived in the separatist held areas of Donbas and 3.1 million in the Government Controlled Areas (GCAs), although net emigration may mean that the actual figures are somewhat lower.²

Since coming to power in 2019, President Zelenskiy has repeatedly articulated his desire to "end the war"

¹ A more detailed context analysis provided in the standard Annex 1.

² Peace in Ukraine: the costs of war. Crisis Group, September 2020

and advance peace through national unity, including the residents of the NGCA. In October 2019, he convened a National Unity Forum in eastern Ukraine, and in his 2020 New Year's address, called for national unity based on dialogue and mutual respect between all Ukrainians. The subsequent creation of a Ministry for the Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories (MRTOT), and the elevation of its Minister to the level of Deputy Prime Minister to strengthen the government's coordination on this critical issue, has further underscored the Government's commitment to the restoring the country's territorial integrity. This requires both diplomacy and dialogue (within the context of the peace process) and military responses to aggression.

The Minsk peace process has not been able to halt the conflict, which has persisted despite various ceasefires during which time over 13,000 Ukrainians have been killed (including over 3,000 civilians), another 40,000 were injured (including over 7,000 civilians), 3.4 million are in need of humanitarian assistance and 734,000 are internally displaced (IDPs), of whom 58% are women.³ During the nine months from July 2020 –May 2021, the OSCE monitoring mission recorded at least 31,076 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 10,065 explosions, 4,877 projectiles in flight, 227 muzzle flashes, 107 illumination flares and at least 15,800 bursts and shots).⁴ Understandably, it is the populations living closest to the 427 km long contact line that are most concerned about these hard security issues.⁵

The 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections refreshed the political scene, with 80% of MPs elected for the first time, nearly a third of whom (30%) are under 35. President Zelenskiy has intensified the reform agenda begun under his predecessor and progress has been made in a range of priority areas, including decentralisation; justice, rule of law, anti-corruption; defence, education; civil service, elections, digital transformation, agrarian and rural development etc. Ukraine continues to cooperate with the Venice Commission regarding the latter's scrutiny of new legislation. Not all reform processes have proceeded smoothly, however. In particular, the anti-corruption reform has demonstrated the continued strength of vested interests opposed to increased transparency and accountability⁶, although a High Anti Corruption Court (HACC) was launched in 2019 and issued its first verdicts in 2020. As also highlighted in the Strategic Framework for cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries, 2022-2026, continued inequalities and persistence of the oligarch system continue to represent significant challenges to development of democratic institutions and a well-functioning free market economy due to the close linkages between oligarchs and certain politicians, civil servants, and parts of the justice system and the media.⁷

The Government in Kyiv has obvious difficulties in extending reforms to the parts of Donetsk and Luhansk that it does not control; for example, the new territorial structure entailed by the decentralisation reform. Neither these areas, nor the Crimea, were able to participate in the local elections held in October 2020.⁸ Indeed, reports indicate that Russia plans to open polling stations in Donbas for the Russian parliamentary elections later in 2021.⁹

In the security and defence area, a new National Security Strategy was adopted in September 2020 which, inter alia, confirms the strategic objective of NATO membership. In March 2021, a Military Security

³ Ukraine Common Country Analysis, UN Country Team, March 2021

⁴ OSCE SMM

⁵ SCORE, 2019

⁶ See chapter 2, *Strategic Framework for Danish cooperation with the Eastern Partnership Countries, 2022-2026*

⁷ Strategic Framework, 2022-2026

⁸ 2020 Ukraine association implementation report, EU Commission

⁹ <http://uawire.org/russia-to-allow-donbas-residents-to-vote-in-elections-to-state-duma>

Strategy was also approved and identifies priorities and short, medium and long-term objectives based on deterrence, resilience and cooperation. An updated Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB) will be available later in 2021 and is expected to maintain its predecessor's objectives of achieving NATO interoperability through adoption of NATO principles, standards and norms. Ukraine's military continue to face the dual challenges of responding to the threats to the country's territorial integrity in the east and implementing a deep institutional and operational reform of command and operational structures and systems. The Ukrainian Armed Forces (AFU) continue to benefit from basic and specialized military training in relation to the ongoing operations in eastern Ukraine. While progress continues to be made in other areas, the most prominent priorities include: 1) the institutionalization of Euro-Atlantic standards, principles and norms within the system of defence governance; 2) command and control to embed NATO-compatible command and staff structures; 3) the introduction of merit-based career management and military education, gender equality and social protection; defence planning and resource management; and the development of NATO interoperable military capabilities.

The partially implemented reform agenda has meant that the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 hit Ukraine and its economy and social infrastructure hard, shrinking resources, diverting political attention, not to mention the human cost and impact on the health service. Overall, the economy is estimated to have shrunk by 22% compared to pre-pandemic rates and this contraction is markedly worse in the east of the country.¹⁰ The pandemic showed that the health system was chronically underfunded and insufficiently prepared in terms of testing services, intensive care, protection equipment, and medicines. The social protection system was unable to match the demand from the most vulnerable and the education system was not sufficiently adaptable to online learning. The lockdown response led to an economic crisis as businesses temporarily closed and the service sector shrank. The combination of informal and formal unemployment, low savings rates and reliance on remittances added to the woes of the most vulnerable. There was also a negative effect on fundamental freedoms, human rights and gender equality, especially for the most disadvantaged groups, and a rise in conspiracy thinking.¹¹

Reports indicate that both personal and political security are lower in the NGCAs than in the GCAs. However, the regional average is low overall; most people do not feel physically safe in their locality or free to share their political opinions without facing repercussions. Women feel less secure than men across all areas including within their homes, as domestic violence sharply rose during the repeated confinements; and young people assess their political security more positively than older people. Residents of the NCGAs feel less secure about expressing political views and face greater economic hardships. Residents of GCAs express mixed levels of confidence in the police, although there also appear to have been improvements as a result of efforts to strengthen community policing.¹²

The challenges are aggravated by continued blockages in the peace negotiations, accompanied by a feeling that not enough has been done to improve the situation on the ground, means there is a growing sense of disappointment and scepticism with many citizens perceiving that they are not listened to when government decisions are made. This feeling of detachment was historically relatively worse in the east of the country, which also includes a substantial Russian-speaking majority. The closure of the contact line since March 2020, as part of the COVID-19 response, has made the situation even more desperate for some stakeholders, for example, pensioners and those seeking medical assistance. It resulted in a 97% reduction in civilian crossings compared to the previous 12 months. Before the crossing points were closed, around 1 million people crossed the contact line to the GCA every month in order to access basic services, such as health care, legal assistance, education, markets and pensions. The most recent security

¹⁰ Ukraine Common Country Analysis, UN Country Team, March 2021

¹¹ Assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Ukraine, UN Country Team

¹² The security situation in the settlements along the contact line, UNDP RPP, 2019

and justice survey (2020) finds that the most pressing issues for respondents in the three eastern oblasts surveyed are unemployment (78.5%) and poverty (77.5%), followed by corruption, health issues such as alcoholism and drug abuse, and pedestrian traffic accidents.¹³ There is also a growing concern about people, including ex-combatants, suffering from the effects of conflict-related trauma. Veterans are reported to have lower levels of trust in state authorities and more negative views regarding gender equality and minorities.¹⁴

Social fragmentation and low levels of trust existed long before the conflict erupted but they have been significantly exacerbated during the conflict and pandemic. Surveys suggest that people in the GCAs feel that authorities care little about the overall welfare of Ukrainian citizens, or are responsive to their needs and concerns. Despite relatively high levels of satisfaction with most public services, people still fail to connect the country's progress with efforts of the government: less than 30% of residents of the GCAs think that authorities represent their concerns and serve the needs of ordinary people.¹⁵ In general, there is also a high level of pessimism about the reform process. Over 75% of the Ukrainian population do not believe that the reforms will benefit ordinary people.¹⁶ This also extends to young people, who are generally more optimistic. The UN's State of Youth in Ukraine report indicates, for example, that (nationwide) only a third of young people surveyed believe that the government adequately supports youth and their participation in public and/or political life.¹⁷

Perception survey's also indicate that community bonds have become weaker during the past two years, with only 24% of conflict-affected residents being fully confident that they could rely on other community members for help. Women, youth and other marginalised communities have been disproportionately hit by the impact of the pandemic.¹⁸ Women have been disproportionately affected due to pre-existing gender inequalities, entrenched stereotypes and discrimination.¹⁹ UN Women's Vulnerability Assessment of Women and Men in the Conflict Affected Areas of Ukraine revealed that women and men from vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, single heads of households, and the older people, face challenges to participation in and equally benefitting from local development. The assessment demonstrated that certain groups of women, in addition to suffering from discrimination directed against them as women, also face multiple forms of discrimination based on displacement, disability, age or other factors, as their interests, needs and concerns are often neglected.²⁰ UN Women also note that an estimated 70% of all households in the east of Ukraine are headed by women and that they frequently have no access to economic means, social benefits, or protection and are at a heightened risk of violence, including sexual violence and sexual exploitation.

Ukraine's civil society has been an important ingredient in the country's recent history. The huge explosion of popular mobilization during the Euromaidan protests in 2013-2014, when 20% of Ukrainians took part in the movement by either protesting or supporting the protesters, fostered greater civil activism.²¹ Today, the legal framework is in general open and supportive for civic engagement and civil society initiatives, although there has been push back in relation to NGOs work on anti-corruption and gender equality. Nonetheless, Freedom House (2019) notes that civil society is able to influence decision-making at various levels of government. In 2016, the Government approved a National Strategy

¹³ Security and justice survey, UNDP RPP

¹⁴ UNDP concept note, 2021

¹⁵ SCORE, eastern Ukraine 2019

¹⁶ UNDP, provisional data

¹⁷ State of Youth in Ukraine, 2019, UN Working Group on Youth

¹⁸ UNDP, provisional data

¹⁹ Ukraine Gender Analysis, Sarah Forti, 2021.

²⁰ Vulnerability Assessment of Women and Men in the Conflict Affected Areas of Ukraine, UN Women, 2017

²¹ <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2017/03/17/global-civic-activism-in-flux-pub-68301#ukraine>

for the Development of Civil Society for 2016-2020 and, in May 2018, its Action Plan was also approved. Decentralization reforms are increasing the role of local councils and have opened new opportunities to foster grassroots civic activism. This has created space for increased transparency and accountability from local government and greater citizen participation. Despite these important achievements, Ukraine's civil society still faces many challenges. Increased public trust in civil society organisations has not led to a sustainable rise in participation: only 7% of citizens take part in their activities.²² Civil society is flourishing in Kyiv and big cities, but it is far less organised and resourceful in towns and rural areas. And local NGOs generally lack institutional capacity, and women's rights NGOs in particular are at risk of violent threats in certain parts of the country, especially in the west of Ukraine bordering Poland. NGOs still largely rely on foreign funding and struggle to diversify their sources of support. Although state funding is growing, reports suggest that it can be distributed to loyal groups without any competition and through corrupt schemes.²³

International partners, including Denmark, have provided technical and financial assistance to assist priority stabilisation, reconstruction, recovery and peacebuilding needs. In 2016 the Ukrainian Government established the National Council on Peacebuilding and Recovery to set strategic direction for recovery efforts and oversee a State Target Programme for Recovery (STP) in Donbass. The latter involves three pillars for action: 1) restoration of infrastructure and social services; 2) economic recovery; and 3) social resilience and peacebuilding. The STP is jointly supported by the UN and World Bank and provides a mechanism through which international partners can contribute to recovery and reconciliation. The STP is complemented by a number of other key policies, including a national human rights strategy and a UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan (currently being updated). These provide a strategic basis for alignment. One of the main UN instruments is UNDP's Recovery and Peacebuilding programme (RPP), to which the PSPU will contribute, as described below. And a key EU programme is U-Lead, which supports the decentralisation reform at national, regional and local levels and stronger service delivery to citizens. U-Lead has also been supported by Denmark.

Further contextual analysis, including in relation to human rights and gender equality, is included at Annex 1.

2.2 Strategic policy framework

The PSPU has been designed so that it is fully aligned with key Danish, Ukrainian and international frameworks. These include:

- The new strategy for Danish development cooperation – *Fælles om Verden* (2021). The PSPU will contribute primarily to the fourth strategic goal, this being to ensure security and safety through peacebuilding and stabilisation.
- The new Danish foreign and security strategy, which is expected later in 2021. Text will be inserted once the strategy is ready.
- The *Strategic Framework for Danish cooperation with the Eastern Partnership Countries, 2022-2026*, the vision of which is to promote the countries' anchoring of European values and strengthen their stability, development, and resilience. Objectives include strengthening democratic institutions, civil society's role and ability to exercise influence, independent media, human rights, gender equality, reduction of social inequalities and inclusion.
- The *Danish National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)*, 2021-2024. Inter alia, this requires a systematic integration of gender perspectives in planning, implementation, and evaluation of foreign, security and development work. Specific goals include the strengthening of

²² <https://dif.org.ua/article/gromadyanske-suspilstvo-v-ukraini-vikliki-i-zavdannya>

²³ Integrity and inclusiveness of the Democratic Process in Ukraine – Analysis of interim research findings in the regions, UNDP, February 2019

women's participation in conflict resolution and peace negotiation as well as the ability to ensure security for women and girls in fragile and conflict affected areas, including preventing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

- *Ukraine's State Targeted Programme (STP) for Donbas Recovery* (2017), which involves stimulating social and economic development of territorial communities to improve the quality of life by strengthening their capacity and social stability, and stimulate economic activity. The STP is augmented by a range of other reform policies, including Ukraine's National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security.
- *Ukraine's latest Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB)* (expected 2021) which will set out a range of objectives and actions relating to the development of the Ukrainian defence system so that it comes interoperable with NATO.
- The *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, in particular SDG 16 (on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), SDG 5 (on Gender Equality), SDG 10 (on reduced inequalities), and SDG 11 (on sustainable cities and communities).
- The *NATO-Ukraine Annual National Plan (ANP)* and the *Individual Tailored Partnership Plan (ITPP)* that will be agreed with NATO later in 2021. These provide a means to link the support from NATO and NATO members to Ukraine's defence reform process.

2.3 Past results and lessons learned

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has supported Ukraine under the European Neighbourhood Programme since 2004 in the areas of governance, decentralisation, anti-corruption, counter human trafficking, independent media, civil society support, and most recently also through the Peace and Stabilisation Fund (together with the Danish Ministry of Defence).

Between 2017 – 2021, the Neighbourhood Programme had a total budget of DKK 860 million, of which around 70% was allocated to Ukraine with the goals of enhancing human rights and democracy; sustainable and inclusive economic growth; and peace and stabilisation. Within the first of these areas, support has been provided to anti-corruption (via the EU's anti-corruption initiative, which is implemented by Denmark); support to human rights (including the Ombudsman and civil society); decentralisation through the EU's U-LEAD programme that supports the comprehensive decentralisation reform; promotion of gender equality and prevention of gender based violence; support to civil society promoting good governance, democracy, and human rights; support to democratic and independent media; support to the Ukraine-Danish Youth House and to the engagement of youth through twinning and exchanges with Danish youth organisations; and support to conflict mediation and dialogue around the Azov Sea and the eastern contact line. An overview of key results from existing stabilisation and related support from Denmark is provided in Box 1 below.

Box 1: Recent stabilisation and related results from existing Danish support

- Improved interaction between citizens and authorities in eastern Ukraine (notably via the establishment of Community Security Working Groups, Citizen Advice Centres, GBV shelters, online mechanisms) contributing to improved trust and confidence in the authorities where these initiatives have taken root (UNDP RPP).
- Enhanced integration of Euro-Atlantic standards and norms within the Ukrainian military, including its leadership, to which Denmark has contributed through its focus on military education, military advice, and tactical training together with close allies. (Danish defence).
- Early openings promoting dialogue across the contact line through Track 2 initiatives, notably focusing on environmental degradation and women's initiatives. (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue).

- Strengthened outreach from the Ukrainian Ombudsperson enabling improved monitoring and human rights protection (including through the National Preventative Mechanism (NRM), also in eastern Ukraine (UNDP, Human Rights programme).
- Improved CSO-Government interaction and an increase in the number of CSOs engaged at national and sub-national level within the area of democratisation and human rights; for example, in the implementation of the National Strategy for Facilitating Civil Society Development. (UNDP, CSDR programme).

Lessons from these engagements include that programming and implementation must be responsive to the political context, where the political will to undertake reforms has not always been sufficient to overcome the practical hurdles that exist, and that harmonisation and coordination amongst international partners is critical to generate leverage and avoid unhelpful overlap. The experience demonstrates that there can be significant vested interests that may push-back on meaningful reforms and that strong political leadership is required. Similarly, the need for policy dialogue to motivate reforms and apply an integrated approach of the different Danish instruments from the political/diplomatic to humanitarian, development and stabilisation funding is needed and in concert with other strong partners from the EU. The programme responds to these lessons by involving local stakeholders (state and non-state) in design and implementation so that the necessary buy-in is present and Government representatives are also included in the top-level management arrangements.

In addition, there are a number of stabilisation initiatives, including a contribution from the Danish National Police to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) (2 police officers); support to entrepreneurship in the Azov Sea region, and the predecessor to the Peace and Stabilisation Programme presented in this document. Between 2018 and 2021, the UPSP has provided support to community security and social cohesion in eastern Ukraine through the UNDP managed Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (RPP) and through defence reform initiatives implemented directly by the Danish defence. Both engagements have been supported in cooperation with close partners and allies.

A Mid Term Review (MTR) of the UPSP defence component in November 2020 found that the programme was relevant, strategically coherent, effective and provided good visibility of the Danish stabilisation support overall, although there was limited actual cross-over points between the two engagements. It suggested that there may be some scope to improve synergies through a stronger focus on human rights, gender equality, and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The results were largely in line with expectations, and in some cases significantly exceeded them. COVID-19 had been an unforeseen risk and caused some delays and adjustment to both engagements. However, the programme had proved that it was adaptable and relevant adjustments were made. With regard to the defence engagement major lessons learned were the value of close cooperation with the larger training programmes of close allies (UK and Canada, with the former providing particular advantages due to its broad framework enabling Denmark to integrate contributions in a variety of operational and tactical areas). A further lesson was that defence reform can be expected to take a considerable time, especially given the extent of the reforms needed and the concurrent operational demands of the conflict in the east. A Danish contribution focusing on key enablers at strategic, operational and tactical levels would be useful. Targeted advisory support where the AFU have an explicit demand can make a significant impact on operational and institutional capacity and existing linkages with close allies provide a relevant support modality that is coordinated, reduces transaction costs and adds new political and military dimensions to relationships with chosen partners. In addition, an adaptive (flexible) programming when working with the AFU will help meet needs as they arise to ensure ownership and institutionalisation of the support.

In relation to the civil part of the programme, UNDP's RPP has been assessed both by a Danish MFA review and by the EU. The MFA review found that the RPP was relevant and delivering good results, notably in relation to access to justice (free legal aid and improved access to courts) and in participation (Community Security Working Groups were an effective way of increasing contact between citizens and authorities). There is however a need to make the rights-based approach more explicit. This is in particular relevant when supporting and collaborating with the authorities to ensure that the human rights principles are also anchored in processes and methodologies of the institutions as part of a focus on structural change. This approach is crucial for the authorities' implementation of their duty bearer responsibly to promote, protect and fulfil human rights for all. Moreover, there is a need for strengthened synergies with other project and programmes (including Danish support e.g. to the Ombudsman through UNDP). It was also found that UNDP should strengthen its relationship with authorities at the national level so that local interventions are tied more firmly with national strategies and policies. Sustainability will be further enhanced through placing local authorities in the lead. Meanwhile, key areas for further promotion include the inclusion of ex-combatants and sexual and gender-based violence where there should be more focus on prevention. The RPP also has a focus on the use of technology to increase access. However, this should not be at the cost of citizens without smart phones and/or internet access. This is in particular an issue for many people living in the villages along the contact line, who are in an already vulnerable position.

The EU review primarily focused on the EU-funded RPP components (mainly components 1 – economic recovery and critical infrastructure and 2) local governance and decentralisation. This found that the project design was relevant with a coherent intervention logic supported by targeted and evidence-based approaches. Beneficiaries' perceptions of the quality of inputs was very positive and there was an effective system of training (on and offline), which had, inter alia, led to over 2000 young women and men increasing their capacities in conflict management, mediation and dialogue. Positive effects were also reported in relation to the attitude of the police and of people towards the police, improved perceptions of social work, and improved perceptions towards people with disabilities.²⁴ Some negative effects of COVID-19 were noted, such as delays in equipment purchase and cancellation of trainings and study tours, and internet shortcomings. Lengthy grant application processes had a negative effect on grant applicants.²⁵

In summary:

- There has been positive traction during the previous phase and this should be capitalised upon by maintaining and broadening support in key areas relating to inclusion and participation.
- There is a need for additional efforts in relation to women, youth, and people affected by conflict-related trauma, especially veterans.
- The RPP continues to provide a useful mechanism for channelling Danish support. Likewise, the joint approaches to defence reform. In both bases, it is important to maintain alignment to Ukrainian priorities to generate ownership.
- There is scope for broadening the support in certain areas to include initiatives led by civil society that complement government-focused processes.

2.4 Justification at programme level

The core rationale for continued Danish support to stabilisation and recovery in eastern Ukraine is provided by a) the continuing need to strengthen inclusion and participation and the extension of quality services to all groups in society – especially women, youth and conflicted affected groups such as the

²⁴ Based on 2019/2020 data. Post COVID, there appears to have been some more negative trends.

²⁵ EU review of EU RPG, powerpoint, June 2021.

veterans and people living near the contact line and b) the positive results and lessons emerging from the existing support. Meanwhile, the relatively modest scale of the Danish support strongly suggests that it should continue to be provided together with close partners and allies where this has previously been effective and that complementarity and synergies between the Danish programmes in Ukraine should be exploited. Beyond its immediate stabilisation goals, the PSPU provides a platform to promote Ukraine's response to the SDGs, notably SDG 16 (peace, security and strong institutions) and SDG 5 (gender equality).

The key theme of the country analysis – that Ukraine faces multiple concurrent security and development challenges – provide the contextual underpinning for the PSPU. These challenges are most acute in eastern Ukraine, partly as a consequence of the on-going conflict and partly due to the historic relative neglect of the region. The scale of reform tasks in eastern Ukraine is thus different to elsewhere in the country but also presents an opportunity to ensure that peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity are integrated into reform programmes so that community security, social cohesion, access to justice, human rights and gender equality are promoted more widely. This is a key part of the rationale for the civil parts of the PSPU.

Recent research points to the relatively greater needs of citizens living close to the contact line so that vulnerable groups are supported and stabilisation enhanced, strengthening inclusion and active citizenship, community policing, and legal aid.²⁶ The recent Danish review of the parts of the RPP supported by Denmark also underlines the importance of addressing the needs of people acutely affected by the conflict, in particular ex-combatants and others suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Research shows that such stresses have negative implications for social attitudes and gender-based violence. A more effective and pro-active response to gender-based violence that also includes preventative aspects is thus required. The PSPU specifically targets participation and inclusion through its support to the RPP (PSE 1), to civil society (PSE 2) and to Track 2 dialogue (PSE 4).

The lengthening conflict (now in its seventh year) and stalled peace process suggests the relevance of continuing to explore alternative (Track 2) openings for dialogue based on common interests on both sides of the contact line. The election of a new administration and parliament in Ukraine offers opportunities to explore fresh ideas and help the parties develop workable options for achieving peace. While the prospects of a break-through appear remote, there are some areas where initiatives currently supported by Denmark could generate positive traction based on shared interests (such as environmental degradation, women's participation in conflict resolution and peace dialogue). In PSE 4, the PSPU will continue to provide support to exploratory Track 2 efforts.

The conflict further provides a key part of the rationale for the military part of the programme, which backs up the long overdue defence reform that is now on-going as well as military training. Ukraine's clear decision to align its armed forces with NATO standards (the main objective of the SDB process) provides both the rationale and the means for Denmark and other NATO allies to support the Ukrainian armed forces (AFU). Denmark has a vested interest in an effective and NATO interoperable AFU that applies Euro-Atlantic standards and norms. This is both to ensure the security and stability of a close geographic neighbour and because of Ukraine's continuing commitment to international security participation, which can involve operational cooperation with Danish forces.

From a security and defence stabilisation perspective, therefore, the key objective is the further reform and capacity development of the AFU so that civil democratic control is enhanced, military leadership is

²⁶ The security situation in the settlements along the contact line, UNDP RPP, 2019

strengthened and military responsiveness and effectiveness improved in line with international standards. The objective of interoperability with NATO provides important benchmarking for this process because of the common standards involved. The experience from Denmark's existing defence assistance to Ukraine is that a combination of practical military training coupled with military education support and senior level strategic advice within a NATO framework (which is what the Ukrainian leadership wants) is productive. It also provides a mechanism to integrate norms and values, such as gender equality and rights, into the cooperation. These factors provide the underlying logic for PSE 3 (defence reform).

In conclusion:

- Stabilisation in eastern Ukraine requires a common effort from both civil and security actors emphasising key norms and values, including inclusion, participation, accountability and transparency that are equally relevant to both groups. The PSPU provides a unique means to pursue these common goals.
- There is scope to enhance a number of common themes, notably relating to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and towards veterans that have civil and defence dimensions.
- As reflected in the 2020 MTR, there is a need to be realistic concerning the actual cross-over between the engagements at engagement level. However, there is potential for synergies at overall programme level.

These aspects are integrated in the theory of change (see below).

3 Summary of the strategic framework and overall strategic objectives

This chapter outlines the overall strategic framework. It should be noted that parts of this are subject to further consultation and, in the case of PSE 2, a tender process. The descriptions below therefore may be updated once these further details are clear.

3.1 Programme Strategic Objective and Results Framework

The overall objective of the PSPU is: *Improved social cohesion, security, justice, trust and state legitimacy, especially in eastern Ukraine, contributing to increasing stability in the region.* This overall objective is supported by the objectives of the four Peace and Stabilisation Engagement (for indicators please see under the individual engagements in this document and attached at Annex 3): **TO FOLLOW**

Table 1: Strategic objectives

PSPU Programme Objective	Improved social cohesion, security, justice, trust and state legitimacy, especially in eastern Ukraine, contributing to increasing stability in the region
PSED 1	Strengthened community security and social cohesion
Engagement Objective	Strengthened institutions and mechanisms that provide community security and justice, increasing social cohesion and propensity for reconciliation and, thereby, addressing conflict potential.
PSED 2	Strengthened contribution from civil society to resilience
Engagement Objective	Strengthened contribution of civil society to promoting the resilience of conflict affected and vulnerable groups
PSED 3	Strengthened Security and Defence reform
Engagement Objective	Strengthened defence reform leading to enhanced AFU effectiveness, compatibility with NATO standards and ability to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and contribute to international security

PSED 4	Improved opportunities for Track 2 dialogue
Engagement Objective	Trust built between people divided by the contact line through dialogue and discreet joint work that addresses common challenges on both sides of the contact line as well as in the Black Sea, thereby complementing and enhancing the Track 1 peace process

The four engagements are described in Chapter 4 of this document.

3.2 Theory of Change at programme level

The Theory of Change is anchored in the context analysis and the possibilities that are available for Denmark to contribute to improved conditions on the ground as well as wider structural changes that enhance the sustainability of results. This is illustrated in Box 2 below alongside an overview of the main conditions necessary.

The context analysis shows that a critical element in promoting peace and stabilisation in eastern Ukraine will be for the Government to further strengthen its standing and legitimacy amongst the conflict-affected population in the east. The logic is that strengthening service delivery will improve the lives of citizens in the GCAs and have positive spin-offs not only for the Government's legitimacy in that part of the Donbas but will also provide an incentive for citizens in the NGCAs with downstream positive effects on the peace process and ultimately reintegration.

To achieve this, the authorities need to provide services in a participatory, accountable and transparent manner that responds to the needs and wishes of different groups in society, including women, youth, the elderly and people suffering from trauma. This will require sustained efforts to enable capable, accountable, inclusive and responsive local governance enhancing the progress already being seen from national reform processes. The stabilisation effect comes through enhancing the benefits for rights holders, especially those living close to the contact line and not least women and young people, through including them in decision-making processes, ensuring equitable access to services, and strengthening perceptions of personal agency and community security and that they see the benefits of these. Some initiatives may also have scope for cross contact line interaction which, if facilitated, can improve common understandings with positive effects on the formal peace process. The experience of the current programme is that developments in these areas are feasible.

Improved security and safety will not occur through civil action alone but must be complemented through enhanced military contributions where these are necessary. Military effectiveness is linked to continued progress in the security and defence reform process – while there are many components of this, key aspects include the further adoption of Euro-Atlantic standards and norms which will only be achieved through a coherent approach at strategic, operational and tactical levels enabling military forces to be delivered where and when they need to be. Improved leadership through stronger and NATO compatible military education and advisory services is an important contributor to this while, in the short term, military training at tactical level will contribute to a more robust defence at the front line where this is needed.

Box 2: Programme level theory of change

Output level	<i>If communities, in particular women and youth, veterans and other vulnerable groups, have strengthened perceptions of personal and community security and increased trust in institutions due to enhanced law enforcement, access to justice and inclusion; and have enhanced capacities,</i>
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	are included and empowered, and participate in local level, evidence-based development and decision-making,
<i>And</i>	
	<i>If</i> CSO support strengthens local CSO capacity to respond to the needs and fundamental rights of women, youth, and people suffering from the effects of trauma, including ex-combatants
<i>And</i>	
	<i>if</i> targeted security and defence advisory and capacity development support is provided to selected entities, including military education and training establishments, within the Ukrainian defence structure in accordance with the priorities set out in the Strategic Defence Bulletin and in concert with NATO allies,
<i>And</i>	
	<i>If</i> groups and individuals representing conflict-affected people from both sides are consulted on practical and political issues; and people-to-people ties across the contact line are strengthened by identifying common interests, fears, and needs,
<i>Then</i>	
Outcome level	<p><i>then</i> this should lead to more equitable and targeted access to services that benefit a wider cross-section of society in the GCAs, better meeting the needs of women, youth and veterans and other vulnerable people, whose security also improves, and whose agency contributes to concrete initiatives across the cross contact line that demonstrate common interests and commitments.</p> <p>The uptake and operationalization of these initiatives will contribute to more robust and more widely supported reform actions at national and local levels.</p>
<i>Leading to</i>	
Impact level	<i>Ultimately contributing to</i> Improved social cohesion, security, justice, trust and state legitimacy, especially in eastern Ukraine, and also contributing to increasing stability in the region
<i>Because</i>	
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens, rights-holders start feeling safer and that they are listened to and responded to. This not only leads to a higher level of trust in public institutions but combined with increased civic activism, also leads to improved social cohesion. • Institutions, duty bearers charged with providing services continue to adhere to their strategies that call for greater citizen engagement and closer contact with communities through methods such as community policing; • There is a strong political commitment at the highest levels in government for recovery efforts in eastern Ukraine which filters down to local authorities that have mandates and budgets to address key priorities; • There is space to deepen peacebuilding efforts at the local level through engagement with key actors in the form of mechanisms such as mediation and dialogue and that there is a willingness to allow informal contacts across the contact line
<i>And assuming the following preconditions apply</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government remains committed to its key policy objectives, including close association with the EU and NATO, and is prepared to back this up with concrete strategies, policies and reform initiatives • Civil society continues to be able to operate in the GCAs and NGCAs • Local authorities have sufficient capacity to continue to implement reforms and engage with external stakeholders, such as UN agencies. • Track 2 initiatives are permitted. • Joint arrangements are an effective and efficient means to channel support

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denmark's close military partners remain engaged and are able and willing to operate with Danish advisors and trainers. |
|--|---|

3.3 Aid effectiveness

3.3.1 *Alignment with global priorities*

The PSPU is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will support Ukraine's contribution to them. The main SDGs that are relevant in this respect are: SDG 16 on peace, security and strong institutions and SDG 5 on gender equality the programme works on these directly by strengthening the conditions for stability and sustainable peace in the GCAs while also offering opportunities to reach over to NCGAs where feasible (e.g. Track 2 dialogue). Gender equality and women's empowerment are cross cutting and distinct initiatives are included in all engagements (e.g. prevention and response to SGBV). By promoting stronger inclusive and participatory governance at the local level, the programme will also support SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities.

The programme will also make a contribution to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) through all four of its engagements which each include elements promoting the involvement of women in decision-making and peace and security initiatives. Examples of this will be the inclusion of gender training in military education and the opportunities presented by women's Track 2 dialogue.

3.3.2 *Alignment with Ukrainian priorities*

The PSPU is closely aligned to Ukrainian objectives as set out in the *State Targeted Programme (STP) for Donbas Recovery* (2017), which sets out civil priorities for recovery and reconstruction arising from the conflict. The STP continues to provide an overarching strategy but in practical terms is now augmented by a wide range of other policy documents, including the National Regional Development Strategy of Ukraine and the Regional Development Strategies of Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts; The Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan; and the National Action Plan for Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (currently being updated). UNDP's Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (RPP) is fully aligned with these policies.

The RPP has three components:

- (1) Economic Recovery and Restoration of Critical Infrastructure
- (2) Local Governance and Decentralisation Reform; and
- (3) Community Security and Social Cohesion.

With its anchoring in UNDP, the RPP provides a means to ensure that governance, security and human rights issues are well covered and the programme has close links to OHCHR, UN Women and OCHA. A further relevant attribute of the RPP is its scope to add a stabilisation element to national reform processes already underway, such as decentralisation, justice reform, law enforcement, and anti-corruption. The RPP is complementary to these initiatives and contributes to them. With regard to decentralisation, for example, the RPP is the main donor supported programme operating in conflict-affected areas in eastern Ukraine. The RPP is currently supported by a number of development partners: Japan, Poland, Czech Republic, European Investment Bank, EU, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland

On the defence side, important policies are also being updated, notably the *Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB)*. The current version from 2016 is an ambitious road map for defence reform. Other important strategies, including the new National Security Strategy (2020) and the Military Security Strategy (2021) confirm the

strategic objective of NATO membership and identify priorities and short, medium and long-term objectives based on deterrence, resilience and cooperation.

Alignment is ensured through the Annual National Programme (ANP) for 2021 that is agreed with NATO and the Individual Tailored Partnership Plan (ITPP) that will be agreed with NATO later in 2021 are aligned with these strategies. They also underpin the Danish support. Ukraine participates in NATO's Planning and Review Process (PARP) and its system of Partnership Goals (PGs) that are a further means to link defence reform objectives to NATO standards, thus aiding the AFU's interoperability with NATO forces. This has the value of simultaneously raising operational effectiveness and promoting common standards. The multinational nature of the PARP and fora associated with NATO-Ukraine cooperation (such as the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR)) provide scope for harmonisation of support to this process. An additional level of coordination is provided through the NATO Liaison Office in Kyiv and through the regular direct contacts between NATO allies. Key international contributors to defence reform in Ukraine are: Canada, UK, U.S. Norway, Germany, Poland, Lithuania.

The PSPU also provides an instrument through which Denmark can contribute to the overall peace process. While the Minsk process remains stalled, opportunities do exist to explore Track 2 dialogue across the contact line and also in relation to the Azov Sea. In pursuing these where it is feasible, the programme will align with and contribute to the formal peace process.

3.3.3 *Synergies between stabilisation and development assistance*

The main scope for synergies between the PSPU and other Danish supported interventions is with the Danish Neighbourhood Programme, where a number of positive opportunities exist and will be exploited. These are briefly described in the table below. There is currently no direct Danish humanitarian funding in eastern Ukraine, although a number of Danish NGOs are operating there, such as Danish Refugee Council and Danish Red Cross.

Table 2: overview of synergies between PSPU and other Danish support

Engagement	Main opportunities for synergy with PSPU
DANEP, 2017-2022. Civil society support implemented by UNDP	Supports growth of a more active civil society. In eastern Ukraine, there are low levels of civic engagement that PSPU will seek to address. PSED 1 and PSED 2 will assist DANEP results and there is scope for close operational cooperation and alignment.
DANEP, youth support	With their focus on strengthening the inclusion and participation of young women and men, PSED 1 and PSED 2 will complement DANEP's Ungepulje and the Ukrainian – Danish Youth House.
DANEP, 2019-2023. Human rights implemented by UNDP. Supports the continued efforts of the Ombudsperson Office, including in relation to the National Preventative Mechanism (NPM) and cooperation with civil society.	PSED 1 will be closely coordinated with the support to the Ombudsperson's activities in eastern Ukraine by (a) increase awareness of human rights amongst duty bearers and rights holders and (b) increasing linkages between local authorities (including judiciary and law enforcement) and citizens.
DANEP, 2020-2024. Anti-Corruption (EUACI) implemented by the EU/DMFA.	PSED 1 will support transparency and accountability but does not have a direct anti-corruption element.
DANEP, 2018-2022. Gender equality and countering gender-based violence	PSPU will directly support gender equality in all PSEDs. Countering GBV is a specific focus area for PSEDs 1 and 2. PSED 3 includes exploratory efforts concerning gender equality in the military.
Support to conflict reduction in the Azov Sea and dialogue across the contact line, 2020-2021	PSED 4 provides continuation support for this.

Danish National Police, 2018+. Various training support via EUAM and Swedish led MIT	UPSP will include initiatives to strengthen community policing and citizen's perceptions of the police and their access to justice, which are aligned with EUAM and other police training goals.
Danish National Police, 2018+. Contribution to OSCE Special Monitoring Mission	UPSP does not have a direct linkage to OSCE SMM.

The November 2020 MTR highlighted the relevance of examining further the possibilities for synergies *within* the PSPU, that is to say cross-over between the four engagements. The formulation has considered this aspect and finds that distinct possibilities exist in the areas of Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) and ex-combatants (veterans), but also in a number of other areas, as illustrated in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Overview of internal PSPU synergies

	Cross cutting aspect	Reflection in PSPU	Comment
a.	Strengthened cooperation and trust between citizens, civil society and authorities in eastern Ukraine, including strengthened awareness of human rights and International Humanitarian Law	PSED 1 – RPP (UNDP) PSED 2 – Civil Society	Mainly PSED 1.
b.	Strengthened ability of authorities' capacity to deliver security and safety	PSED 1 – RPP (UNDP) PSED 3 - Defence	Both PSEDs
c.	Strengthened ability of civil society to participate in local communities, in particular with a focus on youth and women	PSED 1 – RPP (UNDP) PSED 2 – Civil Society	Both PSEDs
d.	Improved possibilities for veterans' rehabilitation and reintegration into society	PSED 1 – RPP (UNDP) PSED 2 – Civil Society PSED 3 - Defence	PSED 3 opportunities need exploring further.
e.	Enhanced dialogue across the contact line to improve confidence and trust	PSED 4 – Track 2	Note, also includes UNSC Resolution 1325
f.	Improved awareness of the situation and challenges in eastern Ukraine, including amongst Kyiv-based and Danish actors to strengthen civil society activity in eastern Ukraine to promote stability and conflict prevention.	PSED 2 – Civil Society PSED 4 – Track 2	Note, also partly fulfilled by PSED 1

3.4 Danish strengths, interests and opportunities

With Ukraine being within Denmark's geographic neighbourhood, there is a clear **national interest** in promoting Ukraine's stability and thereby the prospects for political and economic cooperation. This programme of support will provide a practical contribution that underpins the political support offered by Denmark alongside other EU and NATO members, which emphasises the importance of maintaining Ukraine's security and territorial integrity and the continued progress of the reform process.

The engagements to be supported are **complementary** in the sense that improved (civil) responses to the underlying causes of conflict will reduce the risk that new areas of unrest might emerge and strengthen the areas' integration into wider reform processes and Ukraine's democratic development. On the other hand, improved effectiveness of the AFU in line with international standards (including human rights standards) will increase the chances for positive dynamics developing in the GCAs, where there is a strong Ukrainian military presence, and for a more effective AFU response if military force is called for.

The support provided to UNDP's RPP is mainly financial but it builds upon a **long-standing relationship** with the UNDP country office in Ukraine and is complementary to Danish development support being provided through the Neighbourhood Programme as outlined in Table 1 above. It is intended to extend the **support to civil society** through a separate engagement (PSED 2) that will focus specifically on women, youth, and ex-combatants (veterans) with the intention of complementing the support to these areas coming from UNDP. The support package has also been designed to make

maximum use of the special nature of PSF funding by actively supporting interventions at or close to the contact line that mitigate the negative effects of the conflict as well as its underlying causes.

PSED 3 will be implemented directly by the Danish defence but is fully complementary to the **collective input** being provided by NATO and close allies, which has the aim of ensuring that Ukraine has the ability to maintain its territorial integrity and continue to contribute to international security. The support employs capacities available within the Danish defence that are relevant and in demand. An example of this is the deployment of military advisors to military education institutions as well as special operations forces where the previous support has opened doors and provides excellent possibilities for influence. The continued Danish role in this area will utilise an adaptive approach to programming based on annual tailoring of Danish contributions to where they are most useful in view of the resources that can be made available.

3.5 Contextual risks and possible scenario analysis

PSPU shares a similar overall risk assessment to the Neighbourhood Programme. There are two major risks at the contextual level to which the programme will need to relate. Firstly, as the programme is oriented towards supporting several of the on-going reform processes in Ukraine through enhancing their relevance to conflict factors and international standards, a key assumption is the continuation of the reform processes. There is a risk that the political commitment to continue may vary due not least to the influence of the oligarch system. To mitigate this risk, the programme's engagements will draw from a continued strong policy dialogue by Denmark and international partners (including UN, EU, NATO, and bilateral partners). Also of concern is the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Ukraine's ability to finance reforms and also its effects on freedom of movement, as demonstrated by the closure of the crossing points since March 2020. This has had wider negative effects, including negative programmatic effects, because training has not been possible, service provision has been constrained, leading to lower levels of confidence and trust.

A second set of risks relate to the on-going conflict in the east and annexation of Crimea by Russia. As was demonstrated earlier in 2021, Russia uses its support to the separatist authorities in the NGCAs as well as its military power close to the border to increase pressure on the Ukrainian Government at critical points. This can be in relation to domestic events in Ukraine itself (such as elections) or in response to the Minsk peace process. Russia has further demonstrated its interest in restricting access in and around the Azov Sea. And, despite ceasefires, shelling and mining continues. These incidents have the possibility to act as triggers for wider conflict and thus present a significant risk.

Should the conflict escalate, this will have an impact on the focus of defence reform, it will impact the economy and reform process in areas close to the contact line as well as the ability to operate in the east of the country. The Programme is designed to be able to flex according to such requirements provided that a minimum of safe operational space exists, although the scope for activities in actual conflict areas will be limited. Danish military personnel will not be permanently deployed in or near the conflict areas.

The programme has been designed around three possible risk scenarios:

- 1) *Positive incremental changes.* A reduction in the level of ceasefire violations, management of the COVID 19 pandemic, continued commitment to the overall reform process, including defence reform, improving momentum in relation to decentralisation, and continued and improving access to duty bearers and rights holders in the grey zone along the contact line. In this case, the programme will experience stronger engagement from Ukrainian partners and results achievement.
- 2) *Reform stagnation.* An unstable political situation, exacerbated by the recent decline in President Zelenskiy's popularity and the reported decrease in confidence in the reform process amongst

the population and by the effects of the pandemic and its socio-economic impact, means that the reform process stalls in key areas and progress towards the PSPU objectives slows down. Democratic institutions remain intact but there is competition between them. In this case, the PSPU will be able to maintain its focus but will require constant monitoring and adjustment to ensure that positive dynamics are generated and supported. Denmark may consider reallocating funds from non-performing institutions, to institutions that are reform-oriented to motivate change. There will be a need to maintain a strong policy dialogue from the EU, NATO and member states. Operating at local level, UNDP and the civil society partners will be well positioned to maintain a close relationship with key stakeholders that will mitigate negative effects of a political slow-down at central level.

- 3) *Roll-back of reforms and/or escalation of conflict.* This scenario sees a significant change in the government's orientation and possibly an escalation of the conflict (and hybrid warfare) and renewed budgetary shortfalls, renewed lockdowns due to the pandemic that threaten to destabilise Ukraine further. There are risks of loss of territory, crack down on civil liberties and a significant setback on Ukraine's commitment to the EU association process depending upon the political situation. This would stall and/or reverse the reform processes and run counter to the objectives of the programme. In this case, Denmark would need to consider reallocating funds to independent demand-side stakeholders, such as extending the support to civil society. The support to the AFU would need to be reassessed also in the light of how Ukrainian forces are utilised in the conflict. Political dialogue at high level would need to be supported by EU and NATO member states.

The current assumption upon which PSPU is based is one of cautious optimism in relation to the programme objectives (i.e. scenario 1) taking account of the political commitment to decentralisation and defence reform, although in both cases there are risks of lower than expected rates of progress due to the economic downturn, the continued pandemic, imperfect decision-making processes and the effects of vested interests (the oligarch system), multiple tasking, and inadequate budgeting in relation to the scale of the tasks that require close monitoring (see risk assessment). The other key assumption is that the conflict will not escalate and that Russia's provocations will be managed. All assumptions will be closely monitored by the implementing partners and changes (positive or negative) reported through the programme reporting mechanism (including PSF reports). Assumptions and risks will also be assessed during the PSPU Mid Term Review. Implications arising from changes in the assumptions underpinning the scenarios will be considered in the various programme management arrangements and possible responses include those mentioned above.

3.6 Overall budget for the programme

The total budget for the PSPU is DKK 164 million distributed to the four engagements as follows with an intended disbursement between January 2022 and December 2025 (48 months):

Table 4: PSPU budget, DKK M

	2022		2023		2024		2025		Total	
	MFA	DMD	MFA	DMD	MFA	DMD	MFA	DMD	MFA	DMD
PSED 1	11.0		11.0		11.0		11.0		44.0	
PSED 2	15.0				13.0				28.0	
PSED 3		21.0		21.0		21.0		21.0		84.0
PSED 4	2.0				2.0				4.0	
Unall/TA	1.0		1.0		1.0		1.0		4.0	
Total	29.0	21.0	12.0	21.0	27.0	21.0	12.0	21.0	80.0	84.0

4 Programme overview

4.1 Engagement 1: Community security and social cohesion

PSE 1 will channel DKK 44.0 million (ODA) between January 2022 and December 2025 to the third component of UNDP's RPP, which will strengthen the inclusion and participation of communities, including women, youth and vulnerable groups in local democracy, increase the responsiveness of authorities to community security issues and help build social cohesion. The overall objective is *Strengthened institutions and mechanisms that provide community security and justice, increasing social cohesion and propensity for reconciliation and, thereby, addressing conflict potential.*

The RPP is the main joint instrument for channelling stabilisation and peacebuilding support to Eastern Ukraine. The contribution will have a focus on areas close to the contact line and areas that have been particularly affected by the conflict. It will build upon the progress made during the previous support and reflect lessons learned and the findings of the recent reviews undertaken by the Danish MFA and EU. At the time of preparing this programme document, neither of these reviews had formally reported and UNDP, therefore, has yet develop a full project document. The outline presented here and in the PSED is therefore based on a preliminary concept note and expected to be refined and fully developed in early Autumn 2021. Both this programme document and PSED 1 will be updated on the basis of this. It is expected that this will be possible prior to the PSPU appraisal. However, if this is not possible, the PSED will be subject to a separate desk appraisal and the results of this presented to the PSF Steering Committee for approval.

The **key rationale** for PSE 1 is provided by the need to respond to the negative effects of the conflict that have been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. These have exacerbated the socio-economic exclusion of parts of the population with negative consequences for trust and confidence in state authorities, factors also lying behind the conflict itself. At the same time, there is an opportunity to ensure that peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity are integrated into the current reform programmes, in particular decentralisation, so that community security, social cohesion, access to justice, human rights and gender equality are promoted and current deficiencies addressed. The reform process provides a good underpinning for this and there is a good level of ownership at local and regional level.

Recent reporting to the RPP Board as well as the initial findings from recent reviews describe a programme that is actively contributing to both the overall reform agenda and the specific needs of eastern Ukraine where there has been good uptake of programme initiatives despite the negative effects of COVID-19. Trust and confidence have increased where the programme has been active in promoting inclusion and participation, strengthening service delivery and access to justice. The next phase of the programme will build further on these foundations and provide further attention to underlying issues, such as gender-based violence and the effects of conflict-related trauma (for instance on veterans).

The **theory of change** is that increased inclusion and participation by citizens in decision-making that concerns their direct needs and rights will bolster their trust and confidence in the authorities and enhance community security and cohesion because the effects of their engagement are more tangible. This will have a stabilising effect, reducing the hardships being felt (especially as a consequence of the pandemic) with possible wider effects extending to the NGCAs as the population there sees the progress being made across the contact line. As there is a strong focus on empowerment and capacity development, two critical **assumptions** are that the reform process will continue and that the conflict will not escalate further.

The engagement has been designed so that it helps local authorities and civil society meet the needs and rights of targeted populations and institutions and that there is ownership of the engagement proposed. The engagement is fully aligned with key aspects of the government's reform agenda and its recovery

plans for Donbas. This will contribute to maintaining the positive reform trajectory and make it more resilient by ensuring that actual support is aligned to Ukrainian expressed requests and is provided in concert with local authorities.

Table 5: Overview of PSE 1 result areas

Please note that a full results framework with baselines, indicators and targets will be available once UNDP has prepared its project proposal.

Engagement objective	Strengthened institutions and mechanisms that provide community security and justice, increasing social cohesion and propensity for reconciliation and, thereby, addressing conflict potential.
Outcome 1	Communities, in particular women and youth and other vulnerable groups, including veterans, experience improved personal and community security due to enhanced law enforcement, access to justice and inclusion
Output 1.1.1	The state system of security service provision and civil protection in conflict affected areas of Eastern Ukraine is more effective
Output 1.1.2	Enhanced civil-military coordination, including veterans, contributes to improved community security and community development in conflict-affected areas of Eastern Ukraine
Output 1.1.3	Programmes in schools are piloted for tackling youth aggression and prevention of crime and programmes for juvenile offenders
Output 1.2.1	Access to justice for conflict-affected populations is strengthened, in particular for women and youth, through legal aid provision and judicial services
Output 1.2.2	Civil society's watchdog and monitoring capacities are expanded and strengthened
Output 1.3.1	Social and behavioural change is promoted through raising awareness for the prevention of GBV
Output 1.3.2	Responses and support services are strengthened for survivors of GBV
Outcome 2	Communities, including women, youth, veterans and other vulnerable groups, have enhanced capacities, are empowered and participate in local level, evidence-based development and decision-making
Output 2.1.1	Capacities and mechanisms of informed participation and coordination between communities, law enforcement bodies, local authorities, businesses and other stakeholders are strengthened to distribute locally owned resources for community security and social cohesion
Output 2.1.2	Civil-military cooperation is strengthened using the community mobilization for community security and social cohesion approach
Output 2.1.3	Participation mechanisms are supported in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, to enhance citizens' access to capacity and competence in using digital technology for better engagement in decision making

The overall aim of **Outcome 1** is to strengthen personal and community security and inclusion at the local level, and in particular among women and youth, by supporting communities and other stakeholders to work together and implement local and regional innovative solutions, based on improved knowledge, skills and resources available to all key stakeholders. Such partnerships will address both 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want' dimensions of community security, with a special focus on conflict affected and vulnerable groups as well as on women and youth. It will cover community policing, security and safety centres, preventing and addressing emergency situations, civil protection units, civil-military cooperation, local volunteer teams, youth aggression, and drug-alcohol related awareness, as well as strengthening community-veteran coordination mechanisms.

The overall aim of **Outcome 2** is to ensure that the conflict-affected population, and in particular women and youth, have access to justice and can address the issues/human rights violations emerging from the conflict. It will cover legal aid provision in remote areas and next to the contact line by strengthening free legal aid capacity at the local level, outreach to the residents of the NGCA, supporting the judiciary by making it more trusted and accessible, civil society monitoring and watchdog capacities (including overall capacity building of the local level CSOs), and engagement of youth law students, women and those from other vulnerable groups in local communities.

The choice of UNDP as the implementing partner is based on Denmark's longstanding cooperation with UNDP Ukraine and by its overall effectiveness in managing the RPP. UNDP is thus a known and trust partner and has the required capacity to deliver a large multilateral programme like the RPP. Denmark's support will be pooled alongside that of other donors in a soft-earmarked modality, enabling the Danish contribution to reflect key Danish priorities, such as women and youth. It is thus important to recognise that the Danish funds will be complemented by resources from other international partners. As such, the Danish contribution will also secure Denmark a seat on the RPP Board, which provides good oversight not only of the RPP but of developments more generally in eastern Ukraine. This will be valuable given the thematic expansion of the PSPU compared to its predecessor.

4.2 Engagement 2: Strengthened contribution from civil society

PSE 2 will channel DKK 28 million (ODA) to enhance supporting Ukrainian civil society's contribution to promote the *resilience of conflict affected and vulnerable groups in eastern Ukraine* and in collaboration with Danish NGOs. The intention is that this engagement will be developed by a consortium of NGOs in response to a call for proposals from the basis provided in an Information Note. Once this has been successfully completed, PSED 2 will be updated based upon the winning proposal and subject to a desk appraisal, the results of which will be presented to the PSF Steering Committee for approval.

During the formulation process, an effort was made to understand areas where further inputs from civil society are needed and can complement other initiatives, such as from UNDP's RPP. As explained further below, the findings of this exploration strongly suggest that civil society has a major role to play in strengthening the inclusion and participation of women in local democracy, in responding to and preventing gender-based violence, in engaging young women and men, and in responding the negative effects of the conflict on vulnerable groups, particularly those suffering from conflict-related trauma.

The engagement will enable Danish CSOs to contribute to Ukrainian CSOs' efforts to strengthen the resilience of conflict-affected and vulnerable groups by targeting their most pressing needs and violations of their fundamental rights. The Danish NGO selected will have the comparative advantage of in-depth knowledge and long-term experience in the same thematic area. The engagement will help meet the needs of targeted populations and local CSOs and ensure that there is ownership of the proposed interventions and that actual support remains aligned to Ukrainian expressed needs and requests. Interested bidders will be asked to build in an adaptive approach that allows for rapid re-assessment of the theory of change and response to contextual changes and opportunities. If circumstances allow, this could also contribute to an extension of initiatives to NGCA in the future and thereby support a positive dynamic that produces tangible improvements on the ground.

The following understandings underpin the rationale for this engagement:

- a. In both oblasts (NGCA and GCA), *the conflict related psychological trauma* have been further diffused by *unemployment, poverty and alcoholism and drug addiction* and especially during COVID-lock down, constituting the single major cause fuelling *domestic violence, violence against youth and SGBV*²⁷. The large majority of victims of domestic violence are women, and most perpetrators are their husbands (current or former). Various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) are associated with the current conflict, and women in the East are more at risk than anywhere else in Ukraine, of psychological, economic, physical and sexual violence.

²⁷ According to a survey of over 1 600 female respondents aged 15-49, one in five women (19%) have experienced physical violence in Ukraine since the age of 15, and of these, 16% have experienced physical violence perpetrated by a husband or other relative (domestic violence).

- b. *Sexual violence occurring at checkpoints and against people in detention* has been documented in the territory controlled by armed groups and in the Crimea. There are indicators that *human trafficking and sexual exploitation* are taking place in *combat-affected areas*, related to the fact that there are a large number of male combatants and women's limited means to overcome financial difficulties puts pressure on them to engage in "survival sex." NGO service providers suggest that the increased incidence of domestic violence is correlated to the increased tolerance for violence in the region more generally, greater access to weapons and *post-traumatic stress disorders among combatants*. Still, and despite GBV donor programmes in place, additional services, such as shelters and long-term support, are needed, and it is still necessary to increase the capacity of the *criminal justice system to prosecute and hold perpetrators to account*.
- c. The need for *addressing the barriers suffered by conflict affected youth* has been noted as one of the most important areas. *The psycho-social needs of adolescents*, which are exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the *need for introducing activities and adolescent-friendly spaces providing life-skills training, confidence-building, recreational and pro-democratic civic initiatives for young people with many interests but limited opportunities*. There is also a need for *localised understanding of labour market demands and improved quality of career counselling and internship placements*, as well as exposure to the work environment and job opportunities. Furthermore, the untapped potential and readiness of youth to play a more prominent role in peace and confidence-building in Ukraine and become actively engaged in discourse and decisions concerning their future has been identified as key to the resilience of the conflict affected region.
- d. *Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD*, especially affecting veterans, the symptoms of which include depression, anxiety, sudden eruptions of anger, heavy drinking or sleeplessness. In the most serious instances, soldiers can harm themselves and those closest to them, which may result in gender based violence. Mental health workers speak of an 'increase in domestic violence' without establishing a direct causal link to PTSDs. This is exacerbated by patriarchal culture and stereotyped definitions of male roles and masculinities. The government's response so far, has fallen short of what is needed, with only a handful of clinics and specialists providing assistance. Parliament deputies recently voted to set up universal testing for all fighters returning from the front, but many question whether this is feasible. Consequently, civil society organisations (supported by Canada and Germany) have stepped in to fill in the gaps.²⁸

The outline **theory of change** (which is expected to be further refined at proposal stage) for this engagement is that: *If* Danish NGOs provide advisory support on fundamental human rights, gender equality, youth' rights and trauma management and treatment, and *if* the Ukrainian CSOs provide targeted support to the conflict affected and most vulnerable of women and men, girls and boys living in the eastern region; *Then* the resilience of the targeted beneficiaries will be strengthened. This *will lead to* an increased ability of the conflict-affected and vulnerable groups to respond to crisis and *will thus contribute to* meeting the overall programme objective of enhanced stability of Ukraine.

Two key overall **assumptions** are that the capacity of Ukrainian CSOs is supported throughout the programme and that there is not an escalation of the existing conflict or resurgence of COVID-19 (new variants pandemic) that would set back any progress made within the targeted population. Other assumptions are that safe enough spaces are established to be able to address sensitive issues such as GBV and gender equality in an effective manner and that CSO partners will maintain their current level

²⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35028142>

of operations in Ukraine enabling a meaningful Danish contribution to be made. It is also assumed that contributions are relevant, demand driven and based on a preceding mutual dialogue, are harmonised with other contributors (especially the RPP), and that are delivered using modern tools that also take account of existing systems and practices are most likely to succeed.

The detailed baselines, targets and outputs will be developed by the winning NGO consortium but a **preliminary results framework** is set out in Table 6 below.

Table 6: *Overview of PSE 2 result areas*

Project title	Strengthened contribution from civil society
Project objective	<i>To strengthen the contribution of civil society to promoting the resilience of conflict-affected and vulnerable groups in eastern Ukraine in collaboration with similar partners in Denmark</i>
Impact indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of change in effectiveness of conflict-related psychological and physical trauma support enhanced. Degree of change in resilience of conflict-affected youth through support to their fundamental rights. Degree of change in capacity of women's rights organisations to prevent SGBV and advocate for women's economic empowerment and participation in peace building.
Outcome 1	Conflict-related psychological and physical trauma support effectively enhanced
Outcome indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of change in support to IDPs, women, men, girls and boys with mental and physical trauma, the elderly, the orphans in small town and rural areas, women and children survivors of SGBV and perpetrators of violence Degree of change in support to veteran's condition of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
Outcome 2	Strengthened resilience of conflict-affected youth through support to their fundamental rights
Outcome indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of change in conflict affected youth entrepreneurship and employment opportunities Degree of change in youth civic rights participation structures and volunteer opportunities Degree of change in pro-democratic civic rights literacy Degree of change in support to the most vulnerable of the conflict affected youth
Outcome 3	Enhanced capacity of women's rights organisations to prevent SGBV and advocate for women's economic empowerment and participation in peace building
Outcome indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of change in women entrepreneurship and employment opportunities (targeting in particular, female headed household in conflict affected area) Degree of change in women's participation in peace building dialogue (WPS) (in alignment with and contributing to Ukraine's 1325 National Action Plan) Degree of change in prevention of SGBV enhanced (including the use of new technologies and targeting i) knowledge of and access to adolescent girls' and women's human rights; ii) targeted work on boys, male roles and masculinities towards gender equality, and iii) addressing the root causes and drivers of SGBV and domestic violence.)

The PSE including all three outcome areas will be subject to public tender where a consortium of Danish and Ukrainian organisations will be invited to submit proposals. Focus will be on ensuring overall management and coordination of the intervention areas, as well as providing specific technical assistance, as a strategic partner, related to activities under each of the three outcome areas. The consortium will ensure that the engagement is managed in a way that maximises opportunities for synergies with other programmes, including programmes supported by Denmark. In this respect, the interaction with support

being provided through other PSPU engagements and through DANEP (including via UNDP and UN Women) will be monitored and included in annual reporting to the DMFA.²⁹

4.3 Engagement 3: Support to reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

PSE 3 will channel DKK 84 million (non-ODA) between January 2022 – December 2025 in Danish support to the reform of the Ukrainian defence management and armed forces. Through this engagement, Danish defence will contribute alongside NATO allies and other partners to the defence reform process in a limited number of areas that are consistent with Ukrainian reform plans and NATO's cooperation with Ukraine and where the Danish military have comparative advantages and can add value.

The 2014 separatist revolt in Donbas and illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia underlined the need for a substantial reform and modernisation of Ukraine's armed forces and the Government has set out its plans via new defence and military strategies and with a further Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB) expected shortly. These outline a reform process that is consistent with Euro-Atlantic standards and norms and reflects lessons emerging from the conflict. While Ukraine has invested heavily in enhancing its armed forces since 2014, and improvements have been made, observers note that there remains a need to strengthen decision-making, leadership, further professionalise personnel, improve logistics, and enhance defence planning.

The **key rationale** for this engagement is thus that a more effective and efficient defence system will contribute to preserving and stabilising Ukraine's territorial integrity while at the same time strengthening Ukraine's ability to contribute to wider international security. Achieving these goals requires substantial improvements in Ukraine's military capability and ability to interoperate with NATO and NATO members and close partners. Denmark has a direct interest in both areas. Firstly, a stable and democratic Ukraine is a key to preserving wider security and stability in Europe. Denmark's small, open economy is deeply dependent on a liberal world order, a global set of rules and strong multilateral cooperation. It is therefore in Denmark's strategic interest to counter any aggression towards its eastern neighbours, which undermines the international security architecture. Secondly, Ukraine's political commitment to contribute to broader security also through military means in peacekeeping operations means that Denmark has an interest in enhancing the interoperability and standards of the AFU.

The **theory of change** for the engagement is that: *If* Denmark provides targeted strategic defence advisory and capacity development support to selected entities, including training establishments, within the Ukrainian Defence structure in accordance with the priorities set out in the Strategic Defence Bulletin and in concert with NATO allies and *if* this advice is followed and operationalised, *then* the AFU will have stronger and accountable management systems and enhanced operational capacity in line with NATO standards in the selected priority areas. *This will lead to* an increased ability of the AFU to respond effectively and in accordance with international standards to the continued threats to Ukraine's territorial integrity, particularly in eastern Ukraine, and *will thus contribute to* meeting the overall programme objective of enhanced stability of Ukraine.

As there is a strong focus on advisory services and capacity development support, two **key overall assumptions** are that the defence reform process currently underway is maintained and that there is not an escalation of the existing conflict that would divert further resources away from the reform process. The engagement has been designed so that it meets the needs of targeted institutions and that there is

²⁹ This includes UN Women's project Gender equality in the decentralization and law enforcement reforms (February 2018 – December 2022) which is supported by Denmark and also has engagements in eastern Ukraine.

ownership of the engagement proposed but also that it reflects areas where the Danish armed forces can add value. Other assumptions are that partners with whom Danish personnel will be integrated (such as Canada and the UK) will maintain their current training operations in Ukraine and that the Danish defence is able to release the required personnel so that they can serve in Ukraine. Defence personnel will volunteer for the positions identified.

The overall objective of the engagement is *Strengthened defence reform leading to enhanced defence effectiveness, interoperability with NATO values, principles & standards and ability to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and contribute to international security*. This objective is supported by three outcomes, each with between one and three outputs.

The overall aim of **Outcome 1** is to promote effective Ukrainian defence reform strategies and plans in line with Euro-Atlantic principles, standards and doctrines. This outcome focuses on support to the overall strategic processes underpinning defence reform, in particular senior level advisory services provided by the Defence Reform Advisory Board and the NATO Liaison Office. Ukraine has made progress towards its commitment to adoption of Euro-Atlantic principles, standards and doctrines and it is at this strategic level that the commitment must be spelt out in legal and policy documents. The results of this will enable wider change processes at operational level and below.

The overall aim of **Outcome 2** is to enhance the capacity of the Ukrainian military education system to deliver education in line with NATO principles, standards and doctrines. This outcome has a particular focus on leadership training at the main military education institutions (especially the National Defence University and the National Army Academy) and it provides an opportunity to integrate Euro-Atlantic doctrines concerning human rights, anti-corruption, accountability, gender equality, within the existing and future leadership cadre.

The overall aim of **Outcome 3** is to enhance the capacity of Ukrainian military personnel in relation to NATO standards and doctrines through training from Danish military trainers in cooperation with close partners. This outcome area will continue support to a number of important capability areas that are highlighted in Ukraine's Strategic Defence Bulletin and in the Partnership Goals. Examples, include the enabling of tactical level training through deployment of military trainers (which are envisioned to have a main focus on land forces and maritime special forces and also navy and that may potentially include air force). Depending upon the emerging opportunities, it may also include support for capacity development of AFU through participation in joint exercises.

In addition, a new output area for the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has been included to support Ukraine's new UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan. The precise possibilities and details of this are still to be determined. Similarly, there is also an intention to explore the scope for a Danish defence contribution to strengthening Ukraine's management of veterans (including possibly Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) issues). In both cases, DCD will undertake further fact finding and discussion and possibilities will be developed and discussed within the PSPU Task Force. Should they prove fruitful, approval to commit funding will be sought from the PSF Steering Committee.

An overview of the main results areas is provided below in Table 7.

Table 7: Overview of PSE 3 result areas

Project title	Danish support to security sector and defence reform and operational effectiveness in Ukraine
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Project objective		Strengthened defence reform leading to enhanced defence effectiveness, interoperability with NATO values, principles & standards and ability to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and contribute to international security	
Impact indicator		Degree of progress towards political & strategic objectives in the NATO – Ukraine Individual Tailored Partnership Plan (ITPP) and Ukrainian Annual National Programme (ANP) implemented through the Strategic Defence Bulletin 4.0. (SDB 4.0) and State Programme for Armed Forces of Ukraine (SP-AFU) objectives as assessed by NATO and Ukraine in the bi-yearly ITPP assessments and the yearly ANP assessment. Focus on ITPP Strategic Objectives 01 and O4.	
Baseline	Year	2020	Ukraine's security and defence sector institutions and defence capabilities are still not fully interoperable ³⁰ . Ukraine was granted Enhance Opportunity Partnership status with NATO in 2019. All strategic processes are to a degree aligned with the ITPP and the ANP 2021, and there are similarly on-going strategic developments within the MoD and AFU.
Target	Year	2025	Ukraine has enhanced its ability to secure own sovereignty and security sector and defence institutions and capabilities are increasing interoperable based on the application of NATO values, principles, and the NATO standards. Ukraine institutions are developed to mirror and function with NATO standards and are able to recruit, retain, educate, train and deploy capabilities nationally and internationally. A cultural change in education & training, leadership & management, gender equality and the ability to integrate civilian and military personnel into NATO HQ and operational structure has been developed.
Outcome 1		Effective Ukrainian defence reform strategies and plans promoted in line with Euro-Atlantic principles, standards and doctrines	
Outcome indicator		# and type of Defence Reform Advisory Board (DRAB) and NATO recommendations relating to reform objectives that are addressed by Ukrainian political and defence leadership	
Baseline	Year	2020	DRAB advice has contributed to development of laws on National Security and all strategic documents related to Defence. The support and expansion of interaction of relevance, influence and outreach is facilitated and motivated by the in-country Executive Group with Danish staff-officer support. DRAB is working alongside other international partners in support of Ukrainian defence reforms there is however scope for a stronger and more regular affiliation.
Target	Year	2025	DRAB has continued to support the defence hierarchy in accordance with NATO values, principles and standards. DRAB will have influenced the implementation of SDB 4.0. and the successive development of the Defence Review 2023-2024, National & Military Security strategies post 2025 and the SDB 5.0 (2026 -). DRAB support has developed into a closer alignment with the wider international community in order to ensure that the multilateral and bilateral support to Ukrainian Security Sector and Defence is better coordinated. The support and expansion of interaction of relevance, influence and outreach is facilitated and motivated by the in-country Executive Group (EG) with Danish staff officer support.
Outcome 2		Enhanced capacity of the Ukrainian military education system to deliver education in line with NATO principles, standards and doctrines in areas where Danish advisors have contributed ³²	
Outcome indicator		Degree to which military education in the prioritised areas is compatible with NATO standards and doctrines, including WPS and the integration of gender perspectives, Humanitarian Law, and Human Rights. To be assessed drawing from Partnership Goal G0203	
Baseline	Year	2020	Significant progress in military education has been made since 2015 but there are still challenges within areas such as leadership, command and control, and implementation of NATO-standards in educational training. Limited inclusion of gender/WPS issues in military education.

³⁰ With exception of few units participating in NATO operations and assigned to NATO Response Force

³¹ Support at strategic level in relation to the continuing process in connection with the ongoing defence reform.

³² Support at the operational level by supporting the military education system and promoting effective training planning, decision-making and leadership oriented towards NATO and Western standards (support includes a.o. consultation on learning methods at the National Army Academy and National Defence University, sponsorship support for Ukrainian students at the Baltic Defence College, promoting UNSCR 1325, including support for the implementation of Ukraine's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security).

Target	Year	2025	Results achieved have continued to be developed and consolidated, including the challenges previously mentioned in relation to leadership, command and control, and the implementation of NATO standards in education and training have been addressed and significant developments have taken place. Gender, WPS, Pedagogical didactical development and train-the-trainer have been profiled as key focus points with significant positive results.
Outcome 3		Enhanced capacity of Ukrainian military personnel in relation to NATO standards and doctrines following training from Danish military trainers in cooperation with close partners ³³	
Outcome indicator		Qualitative assessment from OP ORBITAL (POR & PTR) supplemented by Danish observations to degree possible	
Baseline	Year	2020	Significant progress has been made since 2015 but there remains a need for basic infantry and specialist skills as well as training of trainers aligned with NATO-standards and doctrines in tactical training.
Target	Year	2025	AFU able to plan and conduct own tactical training in key areas with external support where needed

PSE 3 will utilise a direct implementation methodology where Danish military personnel provide the contributions in close association with NATO allies and as part of a common effort. The engagement will use the overall strategic management arrangements established for the PSPU. This includes the PSF Steering Committee and the inter-ministerial “Ukraine task force” that will coordinate engagements and discuss programme progress. Day to day management will be provided by Defence Command Denmark (DCD). The Danish Ministry of Defence (DMoD) and DCD will make working level agreements with all counterparts in order to ensure that the engagement runs smoothly and delivers according to its objectives. Most of these arrangements will continue from the previous support.

4.4 Engagement 4: Track 2 dialogue

PSE 4 will provide DKK 4 million (ODA) in two tranches to support Track 2 (informal) peace initiatives relating to the peace process. The objective is that *trust is built between people divided by the contact line through dialogue and discreet joint work that addresses common challenges on both sides of the contact line, thereby complementing and enhancing the Track 1 peace process*. The engagement builds upon previous support to dialogue activities that has been facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD). The intention is that this engagement supports the continuation of these initiatives and that, depending upon progress, a further tranche of DKK 2 million could be provided from 2024-2025. The engagement description here and in PSED 4 is based on a preliminary concept note from HD and this will require development into a full project proposal before approval.

The engagement seeks to support the Track 1 peace process (Minsk II and the Normandy 4), which has not yet been able to halt the conflict, which has persisted despite various ceasefires. A challenge is that formal Minsk negotiations and high-level political decision-making do not yet have sufficient public buy-in, which is essential if any agreement is to sustainably work. Decisions on Donbas are made without systematically consulting conflict-affected populations, women or civil society actors with experience of the conflict. Thus, they are under-represented in decision-making on issues that directly affect them, and the reality of their experience is not sufficiently well understood. The engagement seeks to correct this deficiency by enabling the perspectives, ideas, fears and needs of these important actors to be channeled into the policymaking process and the Track 1 negotiations. The **rationale** for this engagement is that new thinking is therefore needed to break through the impasse and generate momentum towards a peaceful solution in Ukraine. The election of a new Administration and Parliament in Ukraine offers an opportunity to explore fresh ideas and help the parties develop workable options for achieving peace. The engagement will exploit this opportunity by strengthening the ties between people and communities

³³ Continuation of support for the training of Ukrainian personnel at all branches at tactical level in cooperation with other allied training missions

across the contact line. The experience from existing initiatives is that there is scope to do this through people-to-people contacts identifying and implementing concrete steps at the local level and thereby increasing the trust that is required across the contact line. Without local buy-in, policies in this domain are unlikely to work.

The **theory of change** is that *if* groups and individuals representing conflict-affected people from both sides are consulted on practical and political issues, with support from leading experts, and policymakers take their views into account when devising Donbas policy, then policy responses are more likely to address the real needs of people on the ground, as well as enabling ownership, understanding and support for those policies amongst conflict-affected citizens. Bringing these inputs to the attention of decision-makers will give people in the conflict zone an enhanced sense of agency in their future. Through the ideas and contacts that it generates, cross-contact line dialogue will *then* help prepare the Ukrainian government to develop its negotiating position at the Track 1 talks and subsequently help develop measures, laws and policies needed to implement a subsequent agreement and make it sustainable. The logic here is supported by the agency of people directly affected by the conflict who are empowered through the creation of a common platform for channelling their unique views, experiences, and ideas into policymaking and into the official negotiations, thus making peace process more inclusive and its outcomes more sustainable.

This theory of change involves a number of **assumptions**, including that: the political context will allow cross-contact line dialogue to continue, that the parties are interested in allowing an informal track to complement the formal peace process, and new ideas to emerge from the processes and that experienced interlocutors will continue to have access to the Government of Ukraine and the de facto authorities in the NGCAs, as well as to civil society actors and affected populations and that Track 2 initiatives feed into and support the Track 1 process.

The overall objective of the engagement is *Trust between authorities and people divided by the contact line and around the Black Sea strengthened through dialogue and discreet joint work that addresses common challenges on both sides, thereby complementing and enhancing the Track 1 peace process*. This objective is supported by two outcomes, each with between one and three outputs. An overview of the main results areas is provided below in Table 8.

The overall aim of **outcome 1** is to promote stability, avoid miscalculations, and encourage cooperation in the Azov Sea area. A lesson from previous initiatives is that there is a need to broaden the discussion to avoid it being hijacked by the Crimea issue. This can be done by including experts from Turkey because many of the risks and opportunities in the Black Sea are shared between the three states and, given Ukraine-Russia tensions over territorial claims, involving a third country might act to ease the discussions by adding a party that is not directly involved, as commonalities are explored that are not only specific to Ukraine and Russia. There may also be scope to draw from Danish expertise in straits management. The engagement will thus work to develop joint principles and ‘rules of the road’ for increasing predictability in the behaviour of the respective states in the Black Sea. Apart from ‘hard security’ questions, it will also identify other issues of joint interest (e.g. joint ecological threats) that can help build trust and improve maritime cooperation. It will include a scenario exercise to define triggers, likely sources of tension, and mitigating measures.

The overall aim of **Outcome 2** is to improve cross contact line (CCL) interaction, build joint understanding across the divide, and promote greater inclusivity in the official peace negotiations. They promote people-to-people interactions, facilitate technical cooperation on specific problems or common interests, and encourage collaboration between experts, institutions, business, women, civil society, and professionals on both sides. There is already common understanding of the need to avoid ecological

disaster (due to the pollution effects of mining) and the engagement will build on this. A further track will be to build further on women's dialogue. Initial progress already secured will be consolidated and will produce joint statements, policy proposals and joint projects that will bring women's voices into the peace process, ultimately bringing the women's platform together with well-connected women policymakers (politicians, officials) in an effort to build direct channels between women 'on the ground' and those involved in the decision-making process. Finally, a third track involves professionals (lawyers, business people, teachers, etc) who represent conflict-affected communities on both sides. They will formulate joint ideas, policy proposals that respond to local needs, and a joint vision for Donbas. These initiatives will be fed into the policymaking process and the peace process (for example to key figures in the Normandy 4 governments, OSCE facilitators involved in the Minsk negotiations, senior officials in relevant government ministries). This track will build upon the initial steps already taken.

Table 8: Overview of PSE 4 result areas *(preliminary, to be updated)*

Engagement	Black Sea (maritime security) and Cross contact line initiatives
Engagement outcome	Trust between authorities and people divided by the contact line and around the Black Sea strengthened through dialogue and discreet joint work that addresses common challenges on both sides, thereby complementing and enhancing the Track 1 peace process.
Outcome Indicator	Degree of engagement on issues of common concern, such as the environment, inclusion, and socio-economic problems in the conflict zone and around the Black Sea, joint approaches and initiatives to address these concerns.

Output area	Maritime expert dialogue, building on international best practice
Output	Policy options ideas developed by the Black Sea dialogue group that contribute to making behaviour in the maritime zone more predictable, with a view to avoiding a miscalculation or re-escalation.
Output indicator	Degree and regularity of engagement by political and maritime experts on joint problems and opportunities for trilateral collaboration in the Black Sea, and concrete proposals for improved cooperation emerging.
Output	Innovative ideas for dealing with the tensions in the Black Sea conveyed to decision making circles.
Output indicator	Briefings of decision makers and affiliated experts

Output area	Cross contact line cooperation initiatives
Output	Joint preventive measures and environmental projects are devised by experts in the Joint Ecological Dialogue Initiative, or JEDI format that contribute to averting a disaster near the frontline.
Output indicator	Degree of engagement by the participants in the Joint Ecological Dialogue initiative (JEDI) on how to address ecological problems in the region.
Output	Options for improving the humanitarian situation on the ground, as articulated by the civic and women's platforms, have been channelled to the official peace talks (Minsk and Normandy 4).
Output indicator	Number and type of issues of common concern across the line of contact that are raised to Track 1, degree of influence (including from women)

PSE 4 requires the action of an experienced and respected intermediary and it is proposed to continue to support the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) that has been implementing Track 2 initiatives with earlier Danish support. HD has access to a roster of experienced negotiators and has established itself as a neutral and effective Track 2 actor with good contacts on both sides of the contact line as well as in regional capitals. A key lesson from this is that there is a need to build relations and take an adaptive

approach that is responsive to opportunities that may arise (as well as possible setbacks). Once provisional approval has been given to this approach, HD will prepare a full project proposal. The results framework, theory of change, assumptions, and risk mitigation strategy will be fully developed and subject to desk appraisal before a commitment is made. HD will also utilise this project proposal to secure funding from additional donors (Germany and UK have expressed interest).

5 Overview of management set-up

5.1 Overall management

The specific management arrangements for the engagements are set out in the engagement documents and will be updated in the case of the engagements that are not yet finalised.

At the overall level, the PSPU will report to and receive guidance from the PSF Steering Committee.

Overall responsibility for managing the four engagements lies with DMFA (EUN) for PSEs 1, 2 and 4 and with DMD/DCD for PSE 3. EUN will participate in RPP Board meetings and undertake periodic visits to Kyiv and possibly other locations in order to assist in managing and monitoring the PSEs under its oversight.

For PSE 3, DMD and DCD will conduct periodic visits to Ukraine in order to meet with deployed personnel, AFU stakeholders, and cooperating partners. The engagement will rely upon the Danish military advisor in Kyiv, who is in regular contact with key partners and with deployed advisors and training teams.

To assist the management task and strengthen the opportunities for synergies between the two thematic programmes, use will continue to be made of the **inter-ministerial task force** established for the previous programme. This includes representatives from MFA (EUN and SP), DMD, DCD, Danish Defence Attaché to Ukraine, RDE Kiev etc. to coordinate engagements in Ukraine and discuss programme progress, risks, communications etc. The inter-ministerial task force will be jointly chaired by EUN and DMD and will hold biannual meetings, unless developments require otherwise. Meetings will be timed to coincide with reporting and other key events (e.g. Board meetings). Terms of Reference for the Task Force are attached at Annex 6. **TO FOLLOW**

Other than the temporary advisory positions noted for PSE 3, it is not anticipated to include any direct secondments to the Ukrainian authorities or to UNDP.

5.2 Red lines

The PSPU will be implemented in accordance with Denmark's zero-tolerance policies towards (i) Anti-corruption; (ii) Child labour; (iii) Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH); and, (iv) Anti-terrorism. Specific articles on these will be included in the legal agreements for PSEs 1, 2 and 4, where it is specified that violations will be grounds for immediate termination of the agreement. PSE 3 will not have a legal agreement as it is implemented directly by the Danish state through DCD and Denmark's regulations in the above respects automatically apply.

See also section 5.6 below regarding anti-corruption.

5.3 Unallocated funds

The programme budget includes a limited amount of funding that is unallocated (DKK 4 million - ODA). Part of this will be used for the MEAL TA (see below) and for the Mid Term Review in late 2023. This will leave approximately DKK 3 million (ODA) for allocation depending upon emerging needs to PSEs 1, 2 and 4. Decisions will be taken based upon the regular reporting of progress. In the first instance, proposals will be made by MFA/EUN and discussed in the Task Force before being presented to the PSF Steering Committee for decision.

5.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

PSPU will be monitored according to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) principles. These are (1) tracking real-time progress, (2) continuous learning and identifying needs for adjustments, (3) ensuring the information exists for adaptive management, (4) documenting unintended effects, both positive and negative, and (5) assessing real impact on the ground. Monitoring will be implemented at two levels: a) engagement results-based monitoring (for each of the engagements) and b) strategic monitoring at the overall programme level.

Engagement results-based monitoring will provide the information needed to assess whether programme performance is as expected. The focus will be on measuring the progress towards achieving outputs and outcomes and will include the compilation, assessment and presentation of monitoring information according to the agreed results-based frameworks and SMART indicators defined for each engagement. This level of monitoring will be implemented by each implementing partner. Progress will be measured against baseline conditions established in advance (or, if this is not feasible, during start up).

For each implementing partner, a designated coordinator will be responsible for managing programme results-based monitoring. An important part of this function is also to monitor developments in key theory of change assumptions and risks. This will feed into bi-annual PSF narrative and financial reports that will be reviewed by the inter-ministerial task force before being forwarded to the PSF Secretariat.

Strategic monitoring will provide the information and analysis needed for strategic level decision-making by the PSPU Task Force and by the PSF Steering Committee. It will be instrumental in supporting adaptive management, as the Task Force will have a more holistic overview of the programme and can provide input in terms of how the different interventions might be adjusted for better results or greater impact. MFA (EUN) will be responsible for submitting reporting on PSEs 1, 2 and 4 and DCD will take responsibility for PSE 3.

Experience from the previous programme phase is that monitoring of results at outcome level can be challenging where interventions lack data of wider effects and/or have difficulty drawing from this for monitoring purposes. In relation to PSE 3 (defence), for example, there is a need to engage more closely with Op ORBITAL in relation to outcome monitoring. Equally, as part of the programme's adaptive management arrangements, there is a need to regularly assess contextual developments and the continued validity of theory of change assumptions and risks. This will be particularly relevant for PSEs 1, 2 and 4.

To assist the MFA and DMD/DCD with this task, a **MEAL expert** will be attached to the programme. The TA (MEAL) will be a crucial link between the implementation level on the ground and the MFA and DMD/DCD oversight function. The function will include providing assistance with establishing robust links between activities on the ground and results-based management mechanisms so that progress towards results, potential discrepancies, needs for adjustment, and realism checks of the theory of change and risks are managed. The function will also bring out emerging lessons and learning so that synergies between engagements are optimized and wider learning (at PSF level) is enhanced. Funding for this

person is included in the Unallocated/TA budget line and terms of reference are attached at **Annex XX. TO FOLLOW**

A **Mid Term Review** (MTR) of the programme will be undertaken at a point in late 2023 with the purpose of assessing overall progress and determining whether major changes to the programme's result areas are required, including outcome and output targets. The MTR will also provide an opportunity to make adjustments to any of the engagements as part of the adaptive programming approach. Where this is appropriate, changes will be in line with the programme outcomes as described in this document and which are flexible. Funds for contracting external assistance for the MTR have been included in the programme budget and will be managed by DMFA/EUN

Opportunities will also be taken to participate in reviews undertaken by other partners and to access the results of such reviews.

5.5 Financial management

The financial management of the PSPU will be in accordance with the DMFA and DMD/DCD regulations for financial management, including the *Guidelines for Programmes and Projects* (2018), *Danida's Guidelines for Financial Management of Decentralised Units* (2015) and the *General Guidelines for Accounting and Auditing of Grants channelled through Multilateral Organisations* (2012).

- The financial management of PSE 1 will follow the rules and regulations of UNDP, which has a proven track record of sound and robust financial management and sufficient back up mechanisms should these be needed. It will utilise the Financing Agreement template agreed between Denmark and UNDP on **16 March 2018**.
- The financial management of PSE 2 will follow Danish national regulations applying to NGOs and will utilize the consortium financial management in line with the lead consortium's Financial Regulation and Rules (FRR). FRR are regulations that apply to all resources administered by the lead consortium and they will ensure acceptable levels of controls, as well as separation of duties, including the budgeting and accounting of resources. They will reflect the adoption of IPSAS and its terminology.
- PSE 3 will apply DMD/DCD financing regulations. DCD will monitor all activities undertaken. Funds for Danish advisors, trainers etc. are administered in Denmark along Danish State / Defence regulations and transferred to international partners when required.
- PSE 4 will follow Danish national regulations applying to NGOs and will utilize HD's own Financial Regulation and Rules (FRR).

Bi-annual financial reports on all engagements will be submitted to the PSF Secretariat.

5.6 Anti-corruption measures

Ukraine is ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in Europe with a score of 30/100 and 130 out of 180 countries worldwide. The corruption risks associated with the PSPU are assessed as low given that none of the engagements envisage significant financial transfers to third parties; in the case of PSE 1, the UNDP has strong financial management practices in place and the main risk is associated with small grants to NGOs. In the case of PSE 2, funds will be managed by the lead NGO partner, which will be a Danish NGO that is compliant with Danida financial regulations. PSE 3 will not involve any financial transfers other than those connected with the running costs of Danish military advisors, who are subject to DCD regulations. PSE 4 will involve limited funding to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, which is an international NGO with robust financial management and with whom Denmark has cooperated with previously.

Denmark has a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption and all suspected cases must be reported. The PSEDs therefore stress that strict measures must be in place to minimise the risk of corruption or misappropriation of funds and any suspected case of corruption or misappropriation of funds related to the programme must immediately report to the Danish MFA or DMD regardless of whether or not the funds involved are Danish funds, and regardless whether the case has been successfully handled or not. Failing satisfactory implementation of the above, the Danish support may be withdrawn and a claim for refund of monies previously transferred may be made, and, in case of gross negligence, mismanagement or outright abuse, legal redress may be sought.

5.7 Communicating results

Communication of results and learning from the PSPU will contribute to the programme's approach to Doing Development Differently and adaptive learning. In general, sharing of information about the programme will be important in ensuring that citizens in Eastern Ukraine are aware of the efforts being made on their behalf and that they themselves can support. Visibility of PSPU results will also support Danish public diplomacy and help to create awareness of Denmark's engagement partners in Ukraine as well as in Denmark.

It is recognized, however, that a differentiated approach to communication is required given the different focus of the four engagements. It is expected that PSE 1 is fully transparent and that activities and results are made public using UNDP's well developed communications channels, which include infographics and various forms of social media. Likewise, PSE 2 will be publicised by the lead NGO partner in both Denmark and Ukraine as an important part of its implementation strategy. For both engagements, publicizing results will be a mechanism for improving trust and confidence and access to services. For PSE 3, a more tailored communications approach is needed that takes account of possible security issues. Nonetheless, it will be important that good news is disseminated and DCD's public relations department will be consulted regarding possibilities. For PSE 4, a carefully calibrated communications strategy will be developed by the implementing partner in view of the delicate nature of Track 2 dialogue and the potential risks of unintended leaks.

A communications framework is attached at Annex 7 **TO FOLLOW** and sets out the arrangements for various types of messaging in relation to the programme's purpose, priorities and results. The framework notes that effective coordination and targeting of communications is essential and that the inter-ministerial Ukraine "task force" will take this role in relation to major communications. The key stakeholders involved are the Danish MFA, DMD, DCD, the Danish Embassy in Kyiv, the Danish defence attaché to Ukraine.

6 Sustainability and exit

The overall approach to sustainability is to enhance the capacity and systems of Ukrainian state and civil society counterparts in a manner that promote the maintenance of the performance gains promoted. This entails that capacity development needs to be relevant and determined in close consultation with the parties and ideally involves a training of trainers' approach and/or a form for mentoring and advisory support, at least during the initial phases.

PSE 1 and PSE 2's approach to sustainability involves building the capacities of local self-governing bodies, service providers and communities so that they develop inclusive and participatory practices and deliver results on these that are recognised. PSE 1 benefits from the window of opportunity created by the decentralisation process, whereby local administrations have been given the responsibility to manage and disburse larger budgets for development purposes. The reforms also mean that structures are "on-budget" and thereby relatively sustainable. Progress in this respect will be assessed through the programme monitoring (through UNDP) and will inform possible decisions regarding exit. Both

engagements will also work with Ukrainian civil society, which will in many cases take the lead in activities on the ground. PSE 2 is expected to include a degree of civil society capacity development to ensure that this is feasible.

PSE 3's approach to sustainability involves building the capacities of specific units/areas of the AFU that have been identified through the SDB, PARP and other processes, together with close allies and NATO. The engagement uses a training of trainers approach where possible to ensure that training skills are passed on and that institutionalised capacity is developed. The focus on military education is a significant advantage given that it focuses on current and future leaders. Given the on-going operational requirements faced by the AFU, the training needs are expected to persist beyond the programme period and possible decisions about exit/extension will take into account the status achieved and alternatives available. These aspects will be further assessed during the Mid Term Review.

PSE 4's approach is to work at grassroots and empower local actors (including women, youth and professionals, business people) to engage and present ideas for cooperation based on common needs. As such, it has potential to promote sustainable results, although it is the nature of such exploratory initiatives that they may not succeed in the short term.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Context Analysis

Annex 2: Partner overview (tbd)

Annex 3: Result Framework (tbd)

Annex 4: Budget details (tbd)

Annex 5: Risk Management Matrix

Annex 6: ToR for Inter-Ministerial Task Force (tbd)

Annex 7: Plan for communication of results (tbd)

Annex 8: Process Action Plan for implementation

Annex 9: Signed table of appraisal recommendations and follow-up actions taken

ANNEX 1: CONTEXT ANALYSIS

This context analysis is situated at the Programme level. At this level, the purpose of the context analysis is not to provide an exhaustive overview of the National context's issues, but rather to select some of the most pertinent aspects that are hinging upon the new Ukraine Peace and Stabilization Programme.

Key elements of this context analysis are drawn from latest United Nations, Ukraine Common Country Analysis (Data as of March 2021)¹ and includes highlights of existing analysis and research related to:

- (i) Overall development challenges, opportunities and risks.
- (ii) Fragility, Conflict and Resilience.
- (iii) Assessment of Human Rights Situation, Gender and Youth analysis and Human Rights Based Approach.

¹ The United Nation's country analysis includes national and CSO research as well as analyses conducted by amongst others UNDP, OCHA, OHCHR, UNHCR, UN WOMEN, ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, IOM etc,

1. Overall Development Challenges, Opportunities and Risks

Summarise key conclusions from the analyses regarding each of the following points:

- *General development challenges including poverty, equality/inequality, national development plans/poverty, humanitarian assessment.*

Entering the 30th year since independence (1991) and the seventh year after the Maidan protests (2013-2014), **Ukraine continues to face three simultaneous challenges:**

- i) a **complex post-soviet transition** aimed at reforming institutions and the political culture.
- ii) a **fragile security environment** in the context of **the conflict in eastern Ukraine**; and
- iii) the **socio-economic and political impact of COVID-19**.

The 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections ushered in an entirely new leadership in Ukraine. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy won power in an unprecedented landslide victory in April 2019 on the basis of three key promises: **to restore peace, to combat corruption, and to bring about economic revival**. Less than two years later, however, both President Zelenskyy and his party have seen their popularity plummet as promises remain unfulfilled, and renewed political instability remains a real threat.

One of the main decelerators of development in Ukraine is **the simmering armed conflict in the east of the country**. Since losing control of about 7% of its territory in 2014 – including Crimea and parts of the eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions – domestic reforms and peace negotiations have taken place against a backdrop of ongoing armed conflict in the east and the overall political dynamics in the post-soviet space. In the last seven years, over 13,000 Ukrainians have been killed (including over 3,000 civilians), another 40,000 were injured (including over 7,000 civilians), 3.4 million need humanitarian assistance and 734,000 are internally displaced (IDPs).²

The challenges are aggravated by restricted movement across a 427 km-long ‘contact line’ separating the government-controlled areas (GCA) of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and non-government-controlled areas (NGCAs). The NGCAs remain under the *de jure* sovereignty of Ukraine but are controlled by local separatist *de facto* authorities, who are supported by the Russian Federation.

Ukraine’s progress towards Agenda 2030 and its ability to achieve needed economic and social transformation **will directly depend on the successful finalization of a number of foundational reforms currently being implemented: anti-corruption and judicial reform, public administrative reform, de- centralization, land reform, and health care reform**.³

- *Macroeconomic overview*

Ukraine is a lower middle-income country with substantial reserves minerals, ores, favourable agricultural conditions, a well-educated workforce and a strong (if in some areas aged) industrial base. Since 2016, GDP growth has been about 2%, with a continued upward trend projected until 2020, when the COVID 19 pandemic hit. High external debt, low central bank reserves and lingering expectations of currency devaluation amid banking system fragility and falling bank deposits have left the country vulnerable to shocks, tension in society, and an economy unable to

² United Nations, Ukraine Common Country Analysis, (March 2021): 63-64.

³ United Nations, Ukraine Common Country Analysis, (March 2021):6.

generate the level of savings and investment that would underpin sustainable, rapid socio-economic development.⁴

An estimated contraction of 4.5% means COVID-19's economic impact has been less than in most other countries, but the pandemic has had a heavy toll on households and weakened government commitment to critical reforms. Only a partial recovery in GDP growth of 3.8% is expected in 2021, given high uncertainty regarding rollout of the vaccine and the slow pace of structural reforms to address bottlenecks to investment and safeguard macroeconomic sustainability.⁵

Ukraine / Macro poverty outlook indicators

(annual percent change unless indicated otherwise)

	2018	2019	2020 e	2021 f	2022 f	2023 f
Real GDP growth, at constant market prices	3.3	3.4	-4.5	3.8	3.0	3.5
Private Consumption	8.9	11.9	-3.0	4.6	3.8	3.5
Government Consumption	0.1	-5.0	1.8	1.5	0.0	0.0
Gross Fixed Capital Investment	14.3	15.0	-27.4	9.7	8.4	7.5
Exports, Goods and Services	-1.6	6.7	-7.4	3.4	2.0	4.4
Imports, Goods and Services	3.2	6.3	-11.5	6.8	5.0	4.8
Real GDP growth, at constant factor prices	3.3	3.4	-4.6	3.9	2.9	3.5
Agriculture	7.8	1.3	-7.0	5.0	4.5	5.0
Industry	2.0	-2.0	-4.0	2.0	3.0	4.5
Services	3.0	5.7	-4.4	4.4	2.6	2.9
Inflation (Consumer Price Index)	9.8	4.1	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.8
Current Account Balance (% of GDP)	-3.2	-0.9	4.4	-1.3	-2.8	-3.3
Net Foreign Direct Investment (% of GDP)	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.6	6.2
Fiscal Balance (% of GDP)	-2.0	-2.0	-6.1	-5.4	-4.0	-2.5
Debt (% of GDP)	60.6	50.4	63.2	62.4	59.7	57.8
Primary Balance (% of GDP)	1.4	1.1	-2.4	-0.9	0.1	1.8
Lower middle-income poverty rate (\$3.2 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Upper middle-income poverty rate (\$5.5 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	3.4	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.6

Source: World Bank, Poverty & Equity and Macroeconomics, Trade & Investment Global Practices.
Notes: e = estimate, f = forecast.

(a) Calculations based on ECAPOV harmonization, using 2019-HLCS. Actual data: 2019. Nowcast: 2020. Forecast are from 2021 to 2023.

(b) Projection using neutral distribution (2019) with pass-through = 0.87 based on GDP per capita in constant LCU.

Source: World Bank Europe and Central Asia Economic Update, Spring 2021 : Data, Digitalization, and Governance

The 2021 budget has a 5.4% deficit. Together with 10.5% GDP debt amortization and 1.3% GDP private sector arrears, this will increase total fiscal financing needs to 17.2% of GDP (vs. 15% of GDP in 2020). The minimum wage increase will push the public wage bill to over 11% of GDP and create additional pressures on current account imbalances and inflation. Prudent fiscal policy is needed to address inflationary pressures. Accelerating reform momentum is key to faster economic growth and poverty reduction.⁶

The **economy faces several challenges**. A 2019 World Bank Growth study found that with the pre-pandemic yearly growth rate of 3%, **it would take almost 100 years for Ukraine to reach the current income level of Germany and about 50 years to reach that of Poland**. An estimated contraction of 4.5% **means COVID-19 has had a heavy toll on the economy and society**. The UN estimated pre-COVID that aggregate productivity is 4.4 times lower than Germany's.

In 2019 21% of total employment was informal, with agriculture, trade, vehicle repair and construction among the main informal sectors. Foreign direct investment has fallen in recent years.

⁴ United Nations, Ukraine Common Country Analysis, (March 2021):35.

⁵ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35273>

⁶ United Nations, Ukraine Common Country Analysis, (March 2021): 36.

Meanwhile, the estimated losses of GDP per capita in Donetsk and Luhansk are 42% and 52% respectively, compared to a 22% drop for Ukraine as a whole. An estimated 70% of enterprises in GCA have reported decreased investment and revenues, disrupted trade relationships, lack of demand for products and shrinking workforces.

Affecting the economy and society more broadly are **networks of corruption which prevent the country fully releasing its human, democratic and economic potential. The Corruption Perception Index places Ukraine in 2019 only ahead of Russia among its neighbours.** As in other post-soviet and post-communist transition countries, corruption **has affected governance, economic development and public trust, resulting a political economy that continues to mostly benefit national, regional and local economic and political elites.** Oligarchs with vested interests have fought against reforms which could undermine their monopolistic positions or eliminate sources of rent, resisting efforts to establish a rules-based system and regulations.

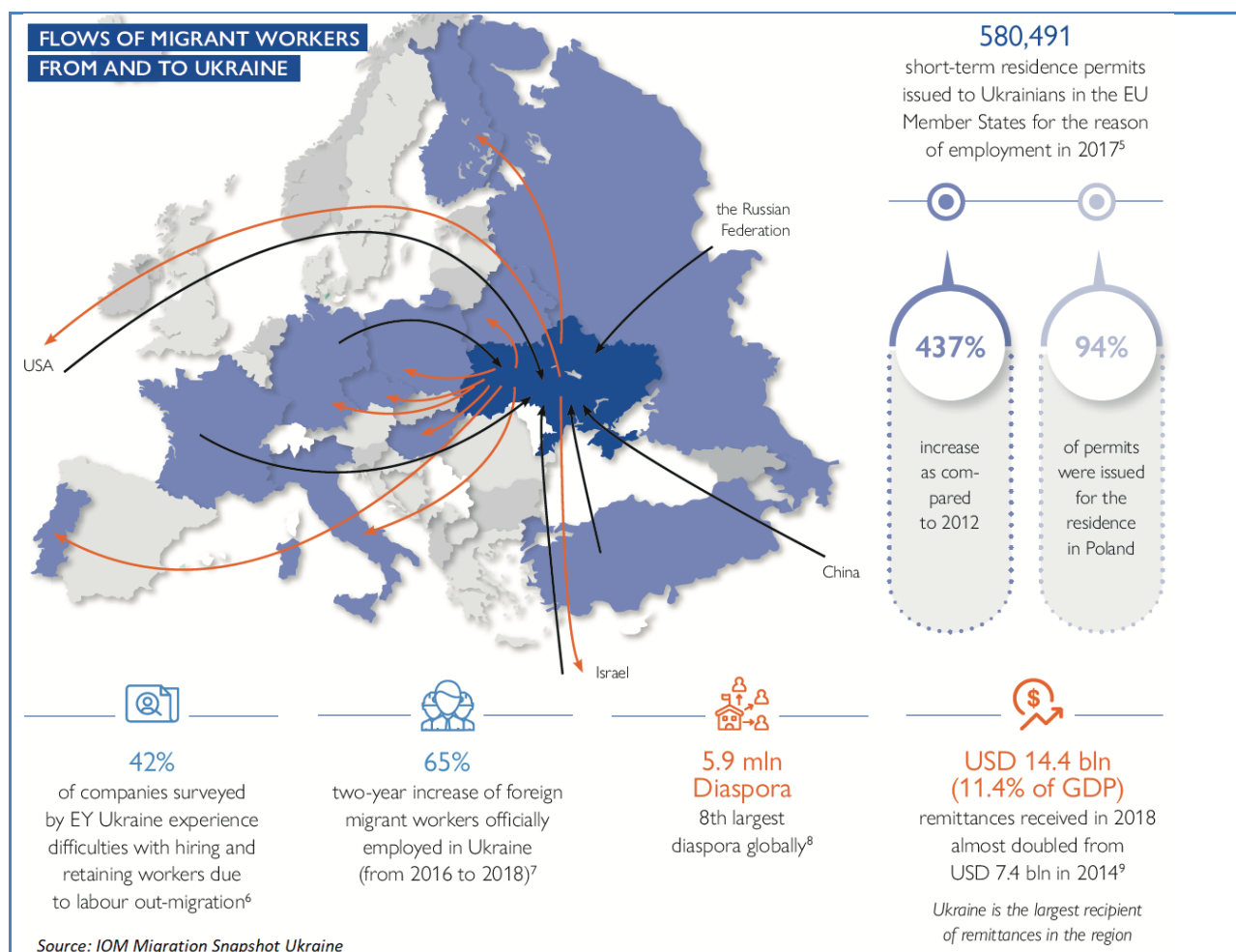
Political divisions remain between reformist and status quo fractions influenced by vested interests. These groups especially fought against reforms which could undermine their monopolistic positions or eliminate sources of rent. **Vested interests have resisted efforts to establish a rules-based system and regulations.** As a result, **formal institutions, including courts, have remained weak, and corruption has been high.** This has undermined commitments to property rights and created legal uncertainty.

Sustainable strong economic growth – necessary for SDG attainment – **requires markedly reducing the carbon intensity of Ukraine's economy. Key obstacles to the transition include lack of diversification of Ukraine's economy, outdated and inefficient production capacity, and subsidies in energy pricing** - including in the tax-benefit system, and **owing to lack of internalization of externalities from greenhouse gas emissions.**

- *Demographic trends, government debt as a proportion of GDP*

In 2018, the national debt of Ukraine amounted to an estimate of approximately **60.21 percent of the GDP.** Since the 1990s, **Ukraine's population has been declining** due to high emigration rates, low birth rates, and high death rates. Ukraine's birth rate is 9.2 births per 1,000 people, which has decreased over 2% every year the past several years, and its death rate is 15.193 deaths per 1,000 people.

Thus, **Ukraine's population is shrinking,** as a result of low fertility rates, high mortality rates, and growing levels of increasingly permanent emigration combined with low immigration rates. Population dynamics affect virtually all national and subnational development objectives in Agenda 2030. Ukraine requires a wide-ranging and comprehensive strategy in order to capitalize on the opportunities presented by changing population dynamics.



Ukraine will face significant economic cost due to demographic decline. Globally the share of older persons is expected to increase from 9.3% in 2020 to 16% in 2050.⁷ Ukraine's population is projected to fall by 20% by 2050, despite a significant increase in the 65+ population. Against these demographic dynamics, IMF projections⁸ show that **GoU expenditure is expected to gradually decrease from 46.9% of GDP in 2020 to 43% of GDP 2025**, creating pressure on health and social protection spending, including pensions, until 2030 and beyond. Effects will depend upon whether the decrease is compensated by the private sector. **Thus, population ageing in the medium and long term significantly affects fiscal sustainability**, but also **inequalities and productivity**. As the dependency ratio worsens, possibly only partially offset by increased longevity and longer economic participation of older persons, significant labour productivity increase will be needed to sustain growth.

- *Status and progress in relation to SDGs, in particular those that are special priorities for the PSPU.*

An inclusive process in 2016-2017 to adapt the SDGs for the Ukrainian context **resulted in a national SDGs system consisting of 86 national targets with monitoring indicators⁹**, which

⁷ www.un.org/development/desa/pd/news/world-population-ageing-2020-highlights

⁸ www.imf.org/en/Publications/FM/Issues/2020/09/30/october-2020-fiscal-monitor#Full%20Report%20and%20Executive%20Summary

⁹ SDGs: Ukraine, National Report, 2017, <https://bit.ly/2JAGZ72>

have been **incorporated in 162 Governmental regulatory legal acts (4,300 planned actions)**¹⁰. The Decree of the President of Ukraine “On the sustainable Development Goals for Ukraine up to 2030” (September 2019) consolidates the SDGs as benchmarks for policy and legislation¹¹, alongside **the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change**.

An important milestone for implementation of the SDGs was preparation and presentation of the **first Voluntary National Review (VNR)**, and this remains a key reference for long term strategic planning in Ukraine. Strategic partnership with the EU under the EU Association Agreement is a clear enabler and opportunity for the Agenda 2030 in Ukraine. **The Government of Ukraine has also developed a National Economic Strategy up to 2030, its implementation will need to be grounded in a human-rights based, gender responsive, and consultative approach.** The GoU is further implementing a set of foundational reforms aimed at restoring economic growth and bringing the country closer to the EU.

Ukraine’s **progress towards achieving the internationally defined targets for Agenda 2030 has been mixed**. By 2020, the targets for reducing poverty and inequality had already been achieved (though COVID-19 may have reversed some of this advance). The SDG dashboard below gives more details of progress towards the international goals.¹²

Current Assessment



Legend: ● SDG achieved ● Challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Major challenges remain ● Information unavailable

Source: Sustainable Development Report 2020, <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/UKR>

Ukraine has seen significant success in reducing poverty. In 2015, 58.3% of the population were living below the subsistence minimum, falling to 43.2% in 2018. Progress was achieved through improving labour remuneration standards and the coverage of housing subsidies (from 12% in 2014 to 64% in 2017). The minimum wage increased from UAH 1,271 to 4,173 (3.28 times), though the average gender pay gap remains at 22%.

Progress towards gender equality continues, but is hampered by lack of fully disaggregated statistical data, insufficient financial support from the state for gender equality programming and strategies, and the existence of a highly conservative “anti-gender” movements, along with deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes. The share of women in Parliament increased from 9% to 21% following the parliamentary elections in 2019, and the 40% gender quota for party lists included in the new electoral Code should further increase the number of women representatives. While women’s economic activity rates are relatively low¹³ women in managerial positions represented 45.2% as compared to 30.5% for men in

¹⁰ Ukraine 2020 Voluntary National Review, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26295VNR_2020_Ukraine_Report.pdf

¹¹ Order of the President of Ukraine No722/2019 “On the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/7222019-29825>

¹² <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/UKR>

¹³ https://ukrstat.org/en/operativ/operativ2017/rp/eans/eans_e/Arch_eansmv_e.htm

2019.¹⁴ Also, there are no significant differences between women and men and girls and boys in access to internet and digital technology. While the most up-to-date data on prevalence of violence against women and girls (VAWG) dates from 2014,¹⁵ there is sufficient evidence to suggest that VAWG remains widespread and has risen during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the eastern part of Ukraine.¹⁶

Most of **Ukraine's indicators for SDG 10 Reduced inequalities, including income targets for the poorest 40% and lack of access to health services or transportation, were getting worse or stagnating.** In 2019, the 40% least well off had 24.4% of the total income of the population, compared to 25.5% in 2015. The average pension was 33.1% of the average wage in 2019, compared to 31% in 2015. The proportion of rural households without a medical facility near their homes increased from 26.3% in 2015 to 29.6% in 2019.

Ukraine is on track for some indicators on Peace SDG 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions. For instance, the level of confidence in the court system among participants in court proceedings rose from 16% in 2015 to 34% in 2019. **However, many indicators, such as for violent crimes (which have generally seen reductions between 2015 and 2019), legal aid and recovery in Donetsk and Luhansk regions are still to be clarified.** The index of perception of corruption in the public sector by the business community has remained stable high at 120-131 between 2015 and 2019 (in 2018 it was 126).

However, the current country SDG monitoring mechanisms are well established and benefit from political support but are **unable to provide a systematic assessment of the situation of vulnerable groups or sex and age disaggregated data. National planning and reporting do not include any form of rigorous "Leave no one behind" progress report.**

- *State of democracy; what is the most important political and democratic trends in the specific context incl. regime persistence, political inclusiveness and government accountability*

Since gaining independence in 1991, **Ukraine has embarked upon a long and uneasy transition, sometimes marked by mass civil unrest** (e.g., the *Orange Revolution* in 2004 and the *Revolution of Dignity* in 2013-2014 – *Maidan Protests*) that has **expressed popular demand for democratic and development reforms.** Surveys and vote results indicate that **aspirations for deeper, transformational and systemic reforms are enduring political expectations.**

The two main concomitant and crucial priorities are **i) deepening and sustaining domestic reforms and the cross-cutting anti-corruption fight,** together with **ii) the simmering armed conflict in eastern Ukraine.** This is against a generally tense geopolitical context, marked by a gradual erosion of multilateralism and divergence among member states **in bilateral contacts and international organizations on the interpretation of various international events and disagreement on how to respond, including on Ukraine.**

There has been **continuity in Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic foreign policy course** since 2014. Ukraine aspires to become a regional governance leader and a leading reformer in the eastern Partnership group of six countries, three of which – Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova – signed

¹⁴ ILOSTAT, data as of 2019, ISCO-08 job classification.

¹⁵ <https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBV%20prevalence%20survey%20%20EN.pdf>

¹⁶ www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/2020/06/rapid%20gender%20assessment_eng-min.pdf?la=en&vs=3646

Association Agreements (AA) with the European Union and remains hopeful of obtaining NATO membership. In 2020, it gained the status of Enhanced Opportunities Partner (EOP) with NATO. Since losing control of about 7% of its territory in 2014 – including Crimea and areas in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk – **domestic reforms and peace negotiations** have taken place against the **backdrop of the ongoing armed conflict** in the east and the overall political dynamics in the post-soviet space.

Ongoing reforms in public administration and decentralization are considered key for Ukraine's transformation. However, vested interests are often seen as undermining reform, and the **perceived persistent oligarchic influence** in politics, public administration, judiciary, law enforcement and media mean that **state institutions and reforms can appear fragile**.

The **2019 elections refreshed the political scene**, with 80% of MPs elected for the first time, nearly a **third of whom (30%) are under 35**. A new **electoral Code introduced a 40% gender quota**, which helped **double the share of women MPs to 21%**. However, **only 3 of the Rada's 23 Committees are chaired by women** and **only 3 of 22 Cabinet members are female**. **Women now represent 8.5 per cent of the military in Ukraine** - a figure that marks definite progress but is still far from the results of other countries such as Norway, where women represent 20 per cent of the military.¹⁷

Freedom House classifies Ukraine as "partly free", with room to improve on political rights and civil liberties, suggesting an unfinished transition from a hybrid regime. The Corruption Perception Index places Ukraine in 2019 only ahead of Russia among its neighbours. With 30 out of 100 points, Ukraine ranks 126th out of 180 countries. **Corruption Index in Ukraine increased to 33 Points in 2020 from 30 Points in 2019**.¹⁸

While it is difficult to estimate **the total cost of poor governance**, which results in loss of revenue, tax evasion, direct corruption and stolen assets, **the economic cost is undoubtedly significant**. A local think tank estimates governance reforms could bring US\$26.6 billion to the Government, with an additional US\$8.6 billion annually, i.e., 5.6% of 2019 GDP. This could reduce national debt substantially.

2. Fragility, Conflict and Resilience

• *Situation with regards to peace and fragility.*

The **situation in the conflict-affected regions of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Ukraine, now in its seventh year**, continues to take a **significant toll on the lives of more than five million people**, and **indirectly affects the whole country**. Despite a renewed commitment to a ceasefire in July 2020, **sporadic shelling, landmines and unexploded ordinances still pose a threat**. Community infrastructure and civilian assets are also targeted, putting **millions at risk of losing access to water, health, education and heating**, and **social and economic ties have been disrupted**.

Economic activity in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland has been severely affected. Prior to the conflict, Donetsk and Luhansk accounted for 12.5% of Ukraine's population and generated

¹⁷ <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/10/women-are-changing-the-face-of-armed-forces-in-ukraine>

¹⁸ <https://tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/corruption-index>

15.7% of the country's GDP and a quarter of its exports. The estimated losses of GDP per capita in Donetsk and Luhansk are 42% and 52% respectively, compared to a 22% drop for Ukraine. **An estimated 70% of enterprises in GCA have reported decreased investment and revenues, disrupted trade relationships, lack of demand for products and shrinking workforces.**

The 'contact line' has also disrupted the pre-crisis network of basic services, hampering access to health, education, and jobs for millions. People on both sides of the 'contact line' now look further afield for services, often in new urban centres, so placing a significant burden on their infrastructure and services. Many of the urban centres in GCA require additional investment to be able to absorb a much larger client base.

Flows between the GCA and NGCA of Donetsk and Luhansk are of critical importance from a peacebuilding and recovery perspective. Prior to COVID-19, some 600,000 residents from NGCA crossed the 'contact line' on a monthly basis. This was up to 20% of the NGCA population based on latest UN estimates. The primary reasons why people cross are to **access pensions, withdraw cash, visit relatives and address administrative matters.**¹⁹

Ukraine's decaying industries pose a significant environmental risk to the country, particularly in the cities where the industrial sector is prominent, including Kyiv, Chernivtsi and Dnipro. Environmental impact assessments have been carried out, but these represent a small proportion of the work that needs to be done. **Abandoned coal mines are a concern. They risk contaminating underground water resources and causing subsidence in populated areas.** Functioning mines with inadequate exhaust treatment systems cause heavy air pollution with particles of pm2.5 and pm10. Lack of investment in the water and mining sectors means companies have highly energy-consuming equipment and huge water losses. In 2013, non-revenue water was estimated to have reached 30%.²⁰

- *Key drivers of conflict and fragility, peace, protection and resilience.*

Since coming to power, the new President has repeatedly articulated his desire to "end the war" and advance peace through national unity, including the residents of the non-government-controlled areas (NGCA). In October 2019, he convened a National Unity Forum in eastern Ukraine, and in his 2020 New Year's address to the nation, called for national unity based on dialogue and mutual respect between all Ukrainians. The subsequent creation of a Ministry for the Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories (MRTOT), and the elevation of its Minister to the level of Deputy Prime Minister to strengthen the government's coordination on this critical issue, has further underscored the Government's commitment to the peace agenda.

While this vision created fresh hope and a sense of renewal, the tasks before the authorities remained daunting, particularly in the face of longstanding and worsening fissures and tensions that continued to confront the government as they try to implement essential governance, decentralisation and health reforms, while at the same time attempting to deliver on the promise of a peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine without crossing political "red lines". Significant obstacles include: unaddressed grievances and perceptions of exclusion related to long-standing regional inequalities, some of which have been exacerbated by the armed conflict and continue to fuel resentment and suspicion between different groups of people; limited institutional mechanisms, services and opportunities for people to fulfil their role as agents of change, including in dialogue and peacebuilding, coupled with inadequate skill sets, knowledge and networks; and lack of participation, especially by

¹⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/eeep-monitoring-2020>

²⁰ <https://sos.danubis.org/eng/country-notes/ukraine/>

young people, in decision-making processes at local and national levels, which undermines their sense of agency, social activism and role as agents for change. Such obstacles continued to undermine social cohesion, trust in institutions, and the government's articulated strategic objective of building national unity on the basis of inclusion and common values.²¹

- *Relevant issues for pursuing the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda (the '1325' agenda)*

The Government has taken important steps to design and draft its **second-generation action plan on the Women, Peace and security (WPS) agenda**. The creation and implementation of National Action Plan 1325 is an important commitment to advancing the WPs agenda. It includes commitments to strengthen women's role in the defence forces and leadership and increased awareness about gender equality, including SGBV. But is not exhaustive. A new NAP is currently being prepared.

Ahead of the 20th anniversary of the UN security Council's resolution 1325, women's groups have been calling on states to address root causes and make concrete, ongoing, financially supported and consistent commitments.²²

In Ukraine, UN Women supports **women's equal representation and participation in peace processes and security efforts**. UN Women leads – with the help of other UN entities – on **supporting the authorities and civil society to implement the WPs agenda through research initiatives, data collection, learning exchange, and documentation of good practices** for ensuring information support to policy and programming.

Support has been provided to the Government's efforts **to translate the WPs agenda from policy to practice, and to work on strengthening the capacity of and increasing opportunities for women at national, regional and local levels**.

UN Women works with the Government to **implement, monitor and evaluate the National Action Plan on Implementation of UN security Council Resolution 1325 on WPs and its localization at regional and community levels**.

UN Women also works with security sector institutions to integrate the WPs agenda into security sector reform.

- *Identify on-going stabilisation/ development and resilience efforts and entry points and the potential for establishing partnerships and alliances with national, regional and other international partners in order to maximise effects of the engagements.*

The so-called **Minsk process**, or the established formats of negotiations based on the Minsk Agreements (2014 and 2015), is the **main politico-diplomatic framework for peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine**. It consists of the Normandy Four (Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany) who meet at various levels and with fluctuating periodicity; the Trilateral Contact Group (composed of four working groups: political, security, humanitarian and economic); and other support mechanisms, such as bilateral channels of negotiations. International facilitators include OSCE

²¹ UNDP, Concept Note: Enhanced citizen engagement for strengthened community security and increased social cohesion in eastern Ukraine Project (2022-2024).

²² www.peacewomen.org/node/103512

mediators and member states, France and Germany. **There is an expectation in Ukraine, and more broadly, of a re-engagement by the new US Administration on key regional issues.**

The continuation of the conflict exacerbates the increasingly divergent developments in the GCA and NGCA, rendering economic rebuilding and social reconciliation more difficult during expected reintegration. The COVID-19 crisis has generated a situation in which connectivity across the ‘contact line’ through the existing five crossing points (with plans for two more EECPs to open) has fallen by 93%, according to OCHA.²³

The Government of Ukraine, especially through the Ministry of Reintegration and Temporary Occupied Territories (MRTOT), **is working to develop a coherent policy for ‘sustainable peace and social cohesion’, and an inclusive vision for reintegration.** International partners also support the approach to **create an enabling environment for eventual reunification and reduced alienation.**

Since 2019, President Zelenskyy has promoted a model of **‘national unity and social cohesion’** in Ukrainian society, and of reconciliation and **reaching out to Ukrainian citizens on the other side of the ‘contact line’ controlled by the two self-proclaimed entities.** This policy **is aimed at decreasing “polarization” inside the country caused by the armed conflict,** providing more space for dialogue, and increasing respect for ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities. It is also seen as a part of Ukraine’s reintegration strategy for non-government-controlled areas in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions. This has reinvigorated both domestic debate and the internationally facilitated peace talks. In January 2021, the **MRTOT published for consultation a comprehensive draft law on state policy for the transition period, encompassing various phases identified as “de-occupation” and “reintegration”.** This initiative could improve national legislative coherence and facilitate the ongoing negotiations for peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine also announced that a Crimea International Platform is planned for 2021.

In recent months, additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, which entered into force on 27 July 2020 and were agreed in the Trilateral Contact Group format, have dramatically reduced civilian casualties and levels of violence. From 27 July 2020 to 31 January 2021, active hostilities (shelling, small arms fire and drone strikes) caused four civilian casualties (all injuries); other civilian casualties in this period were caused by mines, explosive remnants of war and road incidents involving the military. In comparison, in the preceding six months, active hostilities resulted in 65 civilian casualties (8 killed and 57 injured). However, **the current security situation remains fragile and could be easily reversed as, on both sides of the ‘contact line’, military capabilities have been maintained should the political will and commitment to peace recede in absence of further progress in peace negotiations.**

The sustainability of the ceasefire is questioned in the absence of progress in conflict resolution, but also given unilateral actions and the new realities constantly created on the ground and deepening separation across the ‘contact line’. In this context, **since March 2021 mutual accusations of a military build-up have increased promoted by a significant increase in the Russian military presence on the other side of the border.** Any potential escalation of

²³ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/OCHA%20Ukraine%20Situation%20Report%2C%2027%20October%202020%20%5BEN%5D.pdf>

hostilities, arguably in support of political objectives, would most likely negatively affect the local population whose endurance has been severely tested in the last seven years.

Support for the settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine takes the form of **backing for peace negotiations in the established formats.**

The United Nations Secretary-General expressed support for the Normandy, Trilateral Contact Group and other negotiation formats, with- in the framework of the Minsk Agreements. The United Nations, including the Secretary-General, has consistently reaffirmed its unwavering support for the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. **The United Nations has not been formally associated with any of the negotiation formats employed to reach a peaceful resolution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine because it has been ‘delegated’ to OSCE.** The Secretary-General has, however, used any available opportunity to advocate for dialogue, de-escalation and a sustainable peace. since 2014, various resolutions have been adopted in the UN security Council and General Assembly (GA) on the situation in Ukraine, while the matter remains on the security Council and the GA agendas.

The United Nations in Ukraine, mainly through its three pillars – gender-responsive development, humanitarian and human rights – has been contributing substantially to a conducive environment for peace and the continuation of reforms at all levels. The UN is committed to long-term engagement to support Ukraine, in partnership with the Government and other national stakeholders and in concert with international partners.

The UN’s efforts are directed towards supporting a culture of dialogue, participation and inclusivity, promoting the development and peace agenda and national unity and social cohesion. This strategic approach supports the implementation of key objectives and targets within SDG 16.

One of the overarching strategic goals of the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) is to operationalize certain aspects of humanitarian-development cooperation in the GCA. The HRP aims to:

- i) **increase national and regional Government ownership** and responsibility for the provision of humanitarian services.
- ii) **strengthen the capacity of local responders** to complement the Government-led response; and
- iii) **enable a multi-year outcome to implement transitional programming**, ensuring complementarity between humanitarian and development actions, and to build the resilience of conflict-affected population, which should be aligned with the UNSDCF.

In the past six years, humanitarian funding has totalled Us\$1.373 billion, with an average of 45% coverage, but this investment fell short of reducing need. The UN, through the CCA and UNSDCF framework, should enhance its systems of analysis, planning, programming and implementation of humanitarian, development and peace interventions by utilizing the principles of the **Triple Nexus (humanitarian-development-peace).**

The Ukrainian Humanitarian Fund (UHF) offers a strong incentive to coherently operationalize this strategic outcome. An envelope of Us\$2.5 million is allocated for humanitarian projects implemented in close collabo- ration with local authorities and development actors, following an area-based

approach in prioritized GCA locations. **Priority is given to proposals that follow a multi-sector approach and demonstrate strong collaboration with, and planned transfer of responsibility to, local authorities and development actors.** The project partners were requested to ensure coherence towards **a common humanitarian-development vision, especially to facilitate eventual transfer to local authorities.**

This UHF pilot initiative attempts to combine several elements of successful humanitarian-development cooperation. By **deliberately allocating funds towards joint project implementation**, the initiative overcomes one of the main hurdles of donor division along traditional humanitarian and development lines. **Collaboration is promoted throughout the project cycle, with priority given to projects with an area and multi-sector approach planned in humanitarian-development partnerships and consortiums.** Lastly, it ensures the implementation of humanitarian projects set up with a strategic goal **to transfer responsibility to development actors and/or local authorities, fostering capacity building and a unified government approach in the process.**

The **needs of IDPs also need to be addressed in a holistic way.** The UPR calls for the **development and adoption a new comprehensive national strategy and action plan for the integration of internally displaced persons and their access to economic, social and cultural rights for the period beyond 2020.** It also calls for raising public awareness of the challenges they face, meeting their need for mental health services, and accelerating establishment of a compensatory mechanism for property lost or destroyed during the armed conflict.

- *Relevant issues and considerations related to radicalisation and violent extremism*

Euromaidan protests in 2013 were driven by the desire for reforms, willingness to fight corruption, social injustice, violence, bribery, and violation of civil rights. However, the key question that now emerges, is whether and if so, the extent to which this movement was a step towards so-called European values, in the sense of consolidation of human rights, tolerance and the fight against discrimination, crime and hate speech.²⁴ The root causes of the barriers to democratisation, human rights, gender equality, women's human rights and diversity in Ukraine seem to be located at the nexus between the fields of development and conflict. The 'spoilers' can be identified in several broad categories. These groups can be captured in a triangle figure with i) the Ukrainian Council of 12 Churches with the main lobby in Parliament against progressive democratic reforms and pro-gender equality legal reforms including against the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, ii) the Pro-family organisations that includes youth religious scouts and clubs, often organising pro-family (counter gender) demonstrations and festivals sponsored by the State and iii) nationalists and ultra-rights groups which by contrast, prone violent attacks and can include veterans, members of the army and police as well as different groups of homophobic and racist sympathisers.²⁵

These groups and some of which, from the extreme far right movements, although clearly representing a minority are gaining grounds, with easy access and decomplexified internet propaganda. They

²⁴ Insight, Far-right groups: the threat to LGBT in Ukraine (2020)

²⁵ For example 'political party Praviy Sektor (Right Sector), which received attention and support from the population and other politicians, despite having openly racist, anti-migrant, anti-gender, and anti-LGBT rhetoric. Other forces went through a similar process of 'heroization', among them battalion Azov and its derivative political party Natsionalnyi Korpus (National Corps), as well as a number of affiliated to them youth initiatives such as Sokil that declare themselves as a social-nationalist organization.²⁵

manifest themselves throughout a broad geographical area, in the West, East, North and South of the country with a particular concentration in the West.²⁶

- *Considerations regarding the humanitarian situation, migration, refugee and displacement issues, including the need to integrate humanitarian-development linkages and long term strategies;*

Populations in the conflict-affected areas (an estimated 3.5 million people) including:

- **IDPs: 734,000 people** are estimated by the UN IDPs from both eastern Ukraine and Crimea live to be displaced, of whom **58% are women**.²⁷ IDPs from both eastern Ukraine and Crimea live throughout Ukraine with an estimated **340000 in the GCA of Donetsk and Luhansk regions**. IDPs **have limited or no access to justice**; restrictions to mobility due to COVID-19 and conflict **limited access to basic socio-economic rights**; **at risk of eviction as they lost income sources**; **family separations, psychological stress and loneliness**; some live at collective centres where they are at higher risk of infection and without adequate protection/sanitation.
- **Persons living along the ‘contact line’ (conflict-affected persons) face risks to their physical safety**. They face death or injury as a result of shells, small arms fire and mines/unexploded ordnance. Their homes are damaged. Along the contact line, **jobs have disappeared, and the authorities struggle to provide services**. Some communities do not have access to water, electricity and gas; others lack medical services, public transportation and shops for buying food. **Women account for over half of people in need (56%)**, and many of these are heads of household. **A generation of over half a million children (more than 16% of people in need) are growing up surrounded by violence and fear**, which will have a long-lasting effect on their future, and on the social fabric.
- **Persons with disabilities (PWDs) living on the contact line and in NGCAs in Donetsk and Luhansk regions**. Almost 15% of the population in areas close to the ‘contact line’ has a disability, much higher than the average of 6% across Ukraine.²⁸ They have limited access to essential health and social services, justice, and livelihood opportunities. In addition, **PWDs living near the ‘contact line’ face serious personal security issues** due to shelling, inaccessibility of bomb shelters, and absence of infrastructure to provide protective facilities, including basements in multi-story buildings.²⁹ **Pre-pandemic, persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls, already experienced higher rates of violence** than the general population. The prolonged isolation and reliance on family members and caregivers during lockdown presents **heightened risks of violence**. They also often lack accessible information sources.
- **Persons living in NGCAs** must travel long distances at considerable expense and through dangerous territory to government-controlled areas (GCA) in order to maintain family ties and access administrative and social services (e.g., birth/death registration, issuance and renewal of

²⁶ The role of civic organizations and associations promoting traditional family values, namely, opposing the so-called ‘propaganda of homosexuality in Ukraine’. The most prominent organizations promoting this allegory and anti-government policies include Love Against Homosexuality and the All Together movements. The organizations listed above cooperate with local authorities; regularly hold marches and festivals for the ‘traditional family’, which are held under the slogans against homosexuality and the LGBT community. These events often involve the collection of signatures for the introduction of criminal responsibility for, so-called ‘propaganda of homosexuality’. See: <https://vsirazom.ua/>; <http://love-contra.org/>

²⁷ Humanitarian Response Plan, June 2020.

²⁸ ReACH, ‘Humanitarian Trend Analysis 2019’.

²⁹ www.unhcr.org/ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2019/08/2019-08-19-PA_ENG.pdf

passports/IDs, banking, pensions, access to justice etc.). such travel has been further restricted since the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Children living in conflict-affected areas:** The hostilities are estimated to have affected **over 700,000 children and teachers in more than 3,500 education facilities in eastern Ukraine.** Over **250,000 children living near the ‘contact line’ regularly experience shelling and exposure to landmines and explosive remnants of war,** which has made them more prone to **physical injuries and mental health issues.**³⁰

Additional problems have arisen because **the 2020 school year has been mainly conducted via remote learning, leaving many children who live along the ‘contact line’ with no real way to continue their education.** This is mainly due to limited internet connectivity and insufficient access to the necessary digital learning tools. **The emotional trauma caused by movement restrictions, school closures and isolation have intensified the already high levels of stress with which vulnerable children in frontline communities have to contend.** In addition to daily physical and psychological threats, school- aged children see their education interrupted because of the targeting of education facilities. This is despite Ukraine becoming the 100th state to endorse the safe schools Declaration in 2019. school-aged children living in NGCA also face numerous obstacles in using regular or simplified procedures when seeking to continue higher education outside of these territories.

- **People over 65 years of age** make up more than a third of the people in need in eastern Ukraine (37%) and 41% in isolated settlements, **the highest proportion of older people in need in any humanitarian setting in the world.** As an estimated 56% of families in NGCA rely on pensions as the main source of income, pensioners from NGCA must cross into GCA to collect their pensions, which, while the checkpoints are operational, makes them even more vulnerable to exposure to COVID-19.³¹ With the closure of the five checkpoints in March 2020 and only a partial reopening of two checkpoints in June 2020, the number of monthly crossings fell by more than 90% (by 98% in October 2020). As a result, **most pensioners in NGCA have not been able to cross the ‘contact line’ to access their pensions in GCA. The number of NGCA pensioners able to access GCA pensions has dropped significantly from 42% pre-COVID-19 to 13% in October 2020.**³²
- **Persons residing in Crimea and residents of main-land Ukraine with Crimean addresses** in their passport are considered **“non-residents” for banking purposes under Ukrainian legislation.** This creates significant obstacles for maintaining bank accounts and conducting financial transactions. The “non-resident” policy has enabled some banks to continuously violate the property rights of current and former Crimean residents by blocking access to their savings and bank accounts. Ukrainian legislation also requires all Crimean residents to go through a judicial procedure (rather than an administrative procedure) before registering a birth or a death in mainland Ukraine, which can be a burdensome and costly process.
- **Crimean Tatars residing in Crimea face human rights violations** as described in successive General Assembly resolutions and monitoring reports.³³ Remote monitoring by UN

³⁰education Cluster

³¹ ReACH, ‘Multi-sectoral Needs Assessment in NGCA’, February 2020.

³² ReACH, ‘Humanitarian situation Monitor’, October 2020

³³ UNGA Res. 71/205, 19 december 2016; Res. 72/190, 19 december 2017; Res. 73/263, 22 december 2018.

and international organizations indicates a deteriorating human rights situation in temporarily occupied Crimea and Sevastopol city. Since 2014, OHCHR has documented credible **allegations of human rights violations such as arbitrary detentions and the enforced disappearances of 39 men and 4 women, including pro-Ukrainian activists, affiliates of Crimean Tatar institutions and journalists**, most of whom were detained, held incommunicado, and later released. Access to education in or of the Crimean Tatar language remains a challenge, while Ukrainian language education has dramatically decreased since 2014.

3. Human Rights, Gender, Youth and applying a Human Rights Based Approach

Summarise key conclusions from the analyses and implications for the strategic frameworks/programmes/projects regarding each of the following points:

Human Right Standards (international, regional and national legislation)

- *Identify most important achievements of human rights standards relevant for the specific context.*

Ukraine has acceded to and ratified vast majority of international treaties and agreements in the field of human rights. Following its pledges and commitments of June 2008, Ukraine has ratified Convention on Promoting the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol; International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; as well as Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure. In fulfilment of its previous pledges and commitments, Ukraine presented to the appropriate UN bodies seven national reports on implementation of the following international instruments:

- The Convention on Elimination of All Forms Discrimination against Women (21 January 2010 and 14 February 2017);
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict (28 January 2011);
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (17-18 August 2011 and 11-12 August 2016);
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (8-9 July 2013);
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (24 April 2014);
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (05 November 2014);
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (19-20 August 2015).
- The United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment undertook two official visits to Ukraine (May 16-25, 2011, May 19-25, 2016 and September 5-9, 2016).

On April 14, 1998, **the Parliament of Ukraine elected the first Commissioner for Human Rights. The powers and activities of the Ombudsman of Ukraine are fully in line with the Paris**

Principles on the Status of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, approved by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/134.

On March 2009, according to the decision of the UN Bureau of the International Coordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions, **the Ombudsman of Ukraine was granted the highest accreditation status "A"**, which entitles, in particular, to attend meetings of the UN Human Rights Council and to participate in discussion. According to the Article 17 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment an effective National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) was established in 2012 using the model "Ombudsman-Plus". Respectively, the Office of the Ombudsman provides technical and organizational support to the independent monitors, proposed and trained by the National Expert Council.

On 23 March 2021, the President of Ukraine approved a new National Human Rights strategy. Most of UN's recommendations were included in the strategy, which is more thorough and encompassing than the 2015 strategy. As recommended, a separate consultative body representing authorities civil society and international organizations will monitor and assess strategy implementation on a regular basis. A new Action Plan for implementing the Human Rights strategy in 2021-2023 should be adopted by June 2021.

- *Identify the most binding constraints on the intended target group in terms of human rights.*

For the intended target groups the most binding constraints are:

- Firstly, people in affected conflict areas face critical problems related to **their physical and mental well-being especially veterans with PTSD**. These could be related to shelling and landmine contamination, direct damages to housing and civilian infrastructure, lack of access to health care and water and hygiene, as well as the risk of COVID-19 infection.
- Secondly, people in affected areas **face both the direct and indirect impact of the conflict – exacerbated by COVID-19 – on their access to basic services and their ability to meet basic needs and to live a life of dignity**. Numerous drivers of needs are related to **living standards**, such as challenges in access to health care, water and hygiene, inadequate health care capacities, limited freedom of movement, curtailed access to social benefits and civil documentation, as well as winterization needs, and have aggravated the socioeconomic situation.
- Lastly, people in affected areas **face critical problems as their coping mechanisms become exhausted** and individuals, households, communities and systems face **growing challenges to their ability to recover from the crisis**. These coping mechanisms could be linked to **reducing health care expenditure, spending savings or resorting to borrowing money or food**.

Universal Periodic Review

- *Assessment of the most important recommendations from Universal Periodic Review (UPR) relevant for thematic programmes/projects and from any treaty bodies, special procedures, INGOs, Human rights institutions etc. that require follow up by partners in the program.*

The Universal Periodic Review of Ukraine's human rights situation found that Ukraine would find it easier to achieve the SDGs if it **established independent mechanisms to monitor progress and treat beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements.**

Implementing the SDGs, on the basis of the principles of participation **accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind. Given low level of public confidence in state institutions, perceptions of corruption and nepotism, a human rights-based approach is needed to rebuild trust between rights bearers and duty holders.**

The 2020 Assessment of the National Human Rights strategy Implementation,³⁴ identified several gaps and challenges that should be addressed including wide coverage and too-broad wording, duplication of other strategic documents, **lack of disaggregated statistics, lack of well-defined activities as well as the need to provide specific funding for delivering on the commitments. As a result, civil society assessed the strategy as 28% implemented.**

The newly adopted Human Rights Strategy offers significant opportunity to implement the key recommendations made by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2020³⁵:

- Undertake **a human rights impact assessment** of its macroeconomic and budgetary policies with a view to maximizing the resources available to achieve the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights.
- **Increase the level of social spending, paying particular attention to disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and regions** with high levels of unemployment and poverty.
- Take **rigorous measures to combat tax evasion**, particularly the practice of **undeclared wages.**
- Disseminate the necessary information and guidance to local authorities so that they can provide **adequate and affordable social services to people in their localities.**
- Ensure the enforcement of anti-corruption laws and combat impunity for corruption.
- **Enhance the independence of the judiciary** with a view to strengthening its capacity to combat corruption.
- **Adopt a comprehensive and coherent anti-discrimination legal framework**, including for IDPs and Roma.
- Continue efforts to promote increased **participation of women in employment and reduce gender pay gap**; and
- **Adopt a national mental health policy aimed at making mental health** services available and accessible to all and ensure its implementation at both the national and regional levels.

Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) Principles

Non-discrimination and Participation

- *Identify groups among rights-holders excluded from access and influence in the thematic program areas identified and identify barriers for participation, inclusion and empowerment of rights holders.*

³⁴ www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/the-national-human-rights-strategy-assessment.html#:~:text=The%20first%20National%20Human%20Rights,to%20an%20end%20in%202020.

³⁵ Committee on economic, social and Cultural Rights, *Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Ukraine*, e/C.12/ UKR/CO/7 (CesCR 2020)

- *Persons living below the poverty line including children*

18-21 million persons live below the poverty line, including children. A further **6-9 million people have been pushed into poverty as a result of COVID-19**, including an additional **1.4-1.8 million children** as well as those around the contact line, and especially in NGCA. Households with more than three children and households with children below the age of 3 are especially vulnerable. The challenges facing persons living in poverty include lack of access to savings; limited or inaccessible unemployment benefits for certain categories such as informal workers; limited social assistance coverage; no access to medicines or PPE (unaffordable; scarcity) and health care (undocumented migrants, asylum seekers; cannot afford informal payments to health care practitioners or medicines); no childcare available after school, nursery and kindergarten closures; and no or limited access to network of support due to lockdown or separation from families.

- *People with disabilities*

As of 1 January 2020, 2,703,006 persons with disabilities were registered in Ukraine. Of these, **163,886 were children (42.7% female).** The actual number of people with disabilities in **Ukraine is likely to be higher as the Government only counts persons registered as having a disability**, and several barriers exist to registering. **Women with disabilities living on the contact line and in conflict-affected rural areas are face more limitations and barriers due to pre-existing inequalities and exclusion.**³⁶ About 4% of IDPs are persons with disabilities; they encounter difficulties passing through checkpoints and are cut off from support services.³⁷

In Ukraine, persons with disabilities face discrimination in accessing public services, facilities and information, including in health care, education, justice, social protection, public transportation and sports, leisure and culture. This is because public services and facilities have not been designed to be accessible by all and regulatory provisions to ensure reasonable accommodation remain weak. Persons with disabilities also face multiple barriers in personal mobility. Good quality technical aids and assistive devices are not available for free and often persons with disabilities living in remote communities have limited access because of the cost of transportation, the distance lack of clarity on their eligibility and poor referral pathways. Support services, such as personal assistance and auxiliary aids are also a challenge for the majority of those in need. **Community-based support services for persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities are nearly absent.**

- *Persons with mental health conditions and disorders*

In Ukraine, more than 1.6 million citizens are registered at psychiatric and narcological clinics and units. **IDPs, older persons and those living in the east are especially vulnerable. Close to a third of the population are estimated to give experienced at least one mental disorder in their lifetime.** Gender differences exist with PTSD and alcohol use disorders more common among men and veterans, while depression and anxiety disorders are more common among women and veterans.

Ukraine has one of the highest suicide rates in Europe region (15.3 per 100,000 in 2017).³⁸ Poor mental health in Ukraine is tightly interconnected with poverty, unemployment, and feelings of

³⁶ UN Women "Rapid Gender Assessment of the situation and needs of women in the context of COVID-19 in Ukraine" (available at: https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/rapid-gender-assessment-of-the-situation-and-needs-of-women?fbclid=IwAR36T71bzBMC5Dtns8iRKiL_uY49jFGESEbKV'Oa83j3pMTH5u-SDmMb951Pg)

³⁷ Rights of Persons with Disability in the Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine, Analytical Report of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, Kiev, 2016.

³⁸ <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/310711509516280173/pdf/120767-WP-Revised-WBGUkraineMentalHealthFINALwebpdfnon.pdf>

insecurity, compounded by the effects of the conflict. Most people affected may not seek help at all due to lack of trust in the old system, stigma and other barriers.³⁹

- *Vulnerable categories of women experiencing multiple forms of discrimination*

Women in Ukraine face multiple forms of discrimination, amplifying their vulnerability. Gender discrimination is highly intersectional with other forms of social, economic and political vulnerability. Vulnerable groups of women in Ukraine who experience multiple forms of discrimination include (but are not limited to): **survivors of domestic violence and SGBV (over 1.1 million women a year); single mothers (20% of all families); women and girls with disabilities** (who experience higher rates of abuse); **older women in rural, isolated or conflict-affected regions; women IDPs and those living in conflict-affected areas**; women living with HIV; and **lesbian, bisexual, trans and queer (LBTQ) women**.

These women face a range of issues increasing their vulnerability, including discrimination and stigma, difficulties accessing services, heavy volumes of unpaid care responsibilities, low representation and limited involvement in decision making.

- *Roma population, specifically Roma women and children*

UNHCR estimates that **400,000 Roma people live in Ukraine**.⁴⁰ Conditions for Roma communities living in informal settlements are particularly harsh; most of these are located in the west of Ukraine, with some informal settlements also found in the south and near large cities throughout the country. Informal settlements often lack access to on-site water and sanitation and are over-crowded, putting residents at particular risk of COVID-19. Children face major challenges accessing health care. Roma girls are more frequently subject to early marriage than other girls in Ukraine and are more likely to drop out of school. This contributes to their further marginalization and increased risk, exacerbated by widespread discrimination and stigma.

- *Older persons, particular pensioners with pensions below subsistence levels and those living in rural and remote areas*

The 11 million people over the age of 65 in Ukraine make up 27% of the population; 3 million are men, 8 million are women, and 2 million live alone. **About half of all older people have a disability**.⁴¹ Older people are **exposed to extreme poverty**, have limited access to services, and have seen average pensions fall from 50.1% of average salary in 2011 to 28.3% in 2020. Pensioners are among the most vulnerable groups in Ukraine. Of 11.3 million pensioners 82.7% receive pensions below subsistence level, while 20% of pensioners (2.23 million persons) are people with disabilities requiring additional assistance. Older people often face overlapping vulnerabilities such as chronic diseases, disability, and dire financial constraints, with a **high proportion of older women amongst the conflict-affected population**. Other vulnerabilities include isolation, limited mobility, loss of livelihoods, lack of access to and difficulty affording health care services and heightened risk of abuse.

- *Asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons*

³⁹ <https://en.moz.gov.ua/article/news/mental-health-system-transformation-in-ukraine-improving-mental-health-services-and-bringing-mental-health-care-in-line-with-international-standards>

⁴⁰ UNHCR estimates, 2020.

⁴¹ Especially in Zakarpattia region, including the two largest known settlements in Berehove and Mukacheve with up to 7,000 residents each. See OHCHR/HRMMU Briefing Note 'Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Roma communities in Ukraine', Kyiv, 15 May 2020.

According to UNHCR's statistics, as of 31 December 2019, there were **2,172 refugees and 2,430 asylum-seekers** residing in Ukraine.⁴² While some refugees and asylum-seekers have managed to learn Ukrainian, find a job, start a business and integrate, others have encountered challenges in integrating and becoming self-sufficient due to their specific needs. **Refugees also face discrimination**, legislative inconsistencies, corruption,⁴³ as well as language or administrative barriers which prevents them from accessing employment opportunities.⁴⁴ One of the major challenges for integration is **lack of appropriate documentation and a low refugee recognition rate**⁴⁵ on the part of the government.

- *Adults and children living in institutionalized settings*

Child protection efforts remain fragmented across sectors, especially those directed to prevention of family separation and institutionalization and the number of children separated from their families and living in institutions remains high- around 100,000 according to the MOSP. Meanwhile, the alternative family and community-based care solutions remain limited. Children with disabilities represent an increasing proportion in state residential institutions including in boarding schools (internats).

The 13,000 people living in the 286 Ministry of social Policy-managed residential institutions are among the most vulnerable groups in Ukraine. They are at high risk of COVID-19 infection because of underlying medical conditions (most are elderly or disabled), scarcity of PPE for both the residents and the staff and their inability to implement social distancing as they often depend on close contact with staff to tend to their basic needs.⁴⁶

- *Homeless persons*

There are **no reliable statistics** on the overall number of homeless men and women in Ukraine. Civil society organizations estimate that the numbers in Kyiv vary **between 5000 and 40,000**, while about 200,000 people are estimated to be homeless overall in Ukraine.⁴⁷ social services for homeless people are unevenly spread across Ukraine because they depend on the good will and funding of local authorities. In six regions of Ukraine, there are no municipal shelters for homeless people. According to the Ministry of social Policy of Ukraine, social protection facilities in Ukraine have the capacity to provide shelter to 1600 persons. This figure is well below the 21,700 homeless persons counted by the local authorities in 2019. The real demand for shelter may be many times higher given that not all homeless persons apply for services and that there are cities, towns and regions in Ukraine which do not offer services that register and count homeless people.

- *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) persons*

LGBTIQ persons have seen a deterioration in their security situation since 2014, increases in the number of serious crimes committed against them, such as murder and grievous bodily harm, the use of explosives, and attacks on LGBTIQ organizations and events. These crimes are usually not classified as hate crimes due to shortcomings in legislation. In Ukraine societal views

⁴² Of which, a vast majority are assisted by UNHCR. Of 978 newly registered asylum-seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of complementary protection who approached UNHCR partners for assistance in 2019, 23% are women, 17% children and 2% aged 60+.

⁴³ As mentioned by refugees during participatory assessments conducted by UNHCR.

⁴⁴ In theory, asylum-seekers have the right to obtain work permits, but in practice, the system does not allow asylum-seekers to obtain legal employment. The requirements are not realistic: asylum-seekers must obtain a job offer with a salary amounting to ten minimum wages (41,730 UAH, or about US\$1500). Asylum-seekers do not receive financial support from the Government.

⁴⁵ Recognition rate: # of persons who have applied for asylum/# of persons who have been recognized as refugees or granted with a complementary protection status. The recognition rate in 2019 was 21%, a fall from 2018 (26%) and 2017 (29%).

⁴⁶ Report of the special Rapporteur on people with disabilities, 17 July 2019, para. 4.

⁴⁷ OHCHR, "Briefing note: Impact of Covid-19 and its prevention measures on homeless people in Ukraine", 16 June 2020.
http://www.un.org.ua/images/documents/4970/Briefing_Note_Homeless_People_ENG.pdf

towards LGBTIQ people remain highly contaminated by stigma, and LGBTIQ persons themselves report that keeping their identity hidden is key to their survival.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse (LGBTIQ) persons are also **subject to discriminatory practices that limit their employment**. While the Labour Code is one of the only laws in Ukraine that specifically protects persons from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, this does not seem to be enforced, with many reported cases of discrimination, mobbing and stigmatization.⁴⁸

- *Workers and micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs in the informal economy especially women and youth, small farmers and rural households in remote areas*

Unprotected workers: In total 15.7 million people were classed as unprotected workers (13 million) or unemployed (2.6 million) in 2019. This included irregular workers that work without employment contracts; Ukrainian migrant workers, who are **frequently informal workers** in their host countries (3.2 million⁴⁹); foreign migrants in Ukraine, especially those who are undocumented; undocumented stateless people, refugees and asylum-seekers; retired persons; unemployed people; people with disabilities; and people in the care economy. Small farmers and rural households are considered to be the social groups most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change within the agriculture sector.

Returning migrants: Nearly 350,000–400,000 migrant workers have returned to Ukraine due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the absence of work opportunities has put former migrant workers at risk of destitution and inability to pay for their basic needs, which often leads to acceptance of exploitative labour practices.

- *Victims of trafficking (VoTs)*

A June 2020 IOM Ukraine rapid assessment revealed that over 84% of surveyed former VoTs had seen their financial situation worsen and over 50% had lost their jobs (67% men, 33% women) due to COVID-19 quarantine measures. **Due to loss of income, former VoTs and their families were further pushed into extremely exploitative situations, making them more vulnerable and prone to re-trafficking.** In 2020 there was also an almost 30% fall in the number of people granted VoT status by the Ministry of social Policy (MsP), compared to 2019.

Quarantine restrictions and diversion of funding due to the pandemic further limited access to state assistance for VoTs. Social protection structures' focus has shifted to the COVID-19 response activities, meaning certain high-risk groups vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse, including VoTs, receive very limited state attention. **There is inadequate legislation in terms of international adoptions, surrogacy and Ukraine has become a supplier of trafficked children.**

- *Unemployed young people*

Youth unemployment (15-25 years of age) stood at 18.8% in 2019. The share of young people not in education, employment, or training (NeeT) **was around 13% for young men and 19% for young women in 2017.**

⁴⁸ Report of the Independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity 2019 Visit to Ukraine (2020), www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/44/53/Add.1

⁴⁹ European Commission (April 2020) The *Impact of Labour Migration on the Ukrainian Economy*. At https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/economy-finance/dp123_en.pdf.

A key obstacle to improving youth employment is **the skills mismatch. Lack of opportunities** for young people creates **persistent barriers to their future inclusion**.

Transparency

- *Assess the extent to which information is accessible to rights holders including marginalised groups. If relevant, ensure that information is available in other than official languages.*

UNESCO has **documented 16 killings of journalists in Ukraine since 1995**. In 2020, Ukraine informed UNESCO of ongoing investigations in all cases of killings of journalists since 2006. None of these cases has yet been resolved. In **2020, Ukraine was ranked 96th out of 180 countries on Reporters Without Borders' press freedom ranking**. This was a slight improvement from 2019, when Ukraine ranked 102nd. The Council of Europe's platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists currently counts 57 active alerts of incidents threatening media freedom in the country.⁵⁰

The Government continues to increase its efforts to counter disinformation and propaganda in the context of conflict-related developments. It is imperative that fundamental freedoms are safeguarded while countering threats to national security. An interrelated prerequisite to enable progress in all these areas is the need for a continuous effort to protect freedom of expression, support pluralist and independent media and the safety of journalists, as well as to enforce the right to access reliable information for all groups in society, especially critical in times of COVID-19 and vaccination programmes being rolled out. In this regard, a free, independent and pluralist media ecosystem has an essential role to protect and promote information as a common good.

Accountability

- *Identify accountability mechanisms in the relevant area – both horizontal and vertical.*

Freedom House classifies **Ukraine as "partly free"**, with room to improve on political rights and civil liberties, suggesting an **unfinished transition from a hybrid regime**.

International partners have shown their commitment to Ukraine in this area. For instance, the European Union allotted around €15 million, the highest support for a third country in the last six years. Support is based on the "more for more" principle, on **the condition that the Government of Ukraine meets the expectations and aspirations of Ukrainian citizens for democratic and accountable governance and inclusive and sustainable economic growth**. While it is difficult to estimate the total cost of poor governance, which results in loss of revenue, tax evasion, direct corruption and stolen assets, the economic cost is undoubtedly significant.

A local think tank⁵¹ estimates governance reforms could bring Us\$26.6 billion to the Government, with an additional Us\$8.6 billion annually, i.e. 5.6% of 2019 GDP. This could reduce national debt. efforts should continue to reduce the level of corruption and rebuild trust in authorities by such measures as sustaining an independent and professional judiciary and support for anti-corruption bodies, (such as the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, NABU and the state Bureau of Investigations), to enable a transparent and open privatization process.

Gender

⁵⁰ www.coe.int/en/web/media-freedom

⁵¹ <https://ces.org.ua/ua-how-much-does-the-budget-lose-due-to-the-lack-of-good-governance/>

- *Identify key challenges and opportunities for gender equality and identify social and gender norms that drive inequality at all levels (policy and systems, institutional and societal, community, family, inter-personal, individual) with particular attention to underlying power structures and meta-norms.*

Key challenges for Women in the East

Various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) are associated with the current conflict, and women in the East are more at risk than anywhere else in Ukraine, of psychological, economic, physical and sexual violence. **Sexual violence occurring at checkpoints and against people in detention** has been documented in the territory controlled by armed groups and in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

There are indicators that **human trafficking and sexual exploitation are taking place in combat-affected areas**, related to the fact that there are a large number of male combatants and women's limited means to overcome financial difficulties puts pressure on them to engage in "survival sex." NGO service providers suggest that the incidence of domestic violence is increasing, related to the increased tolerance for violence in the region more generally, greater access to weapons and post-traumatic stress disorders among combatants. Still, and despite GBV donor programmes in place, additional services, such as shelters and long-term support, are needed, and it is necessary to increase the capacity of the criminal justice system to prosecute and hold perpetrators to account.

There are currently 30 state-supported Centres for Social and Psychological Assistance that offer shelter services, but these are organizations that serve people in a number of difficult life situations, including survivors of domestic violence. **Some of these centres are also being used to house IDPs and, thus, the places available for GBV victims has become even limited and their security cannot be ensured.** In addition, the state supports just under 700 Centres for Social Assistance for Youth, Children and Families, but these are not specialized institutions and most have only minimal staff that do not include psychologists or lawyers (social workers handle cases of domestic violence). Employees of municipal centres that provide services for women survivors of violence have limited opportunities for training.⁵²

Findings of recent studies suggest that **survivors of GBV regularly face social stigma and rejection in assessed communities in Donbas hindering help-seeking and GBV service provision. Raising awareness among the population about GBV was one of the most commonly mentioned ways to overcome GBV.** The establishment of more efficient coordination mechanisms and improving technical and soft skills of GBV service providers are also frequently reported demands for improving access to GBV services. The lack of shelters, social housing, and safe spaces for survivors of GBV emerged as a major gap in GBV service provision in eastern Ukraine, especially in Luhansk Oblast in addition to the lack of psychologists and formal peer support groups for survivors of GBV.⁵³

Among female **IDPs, several groups of women are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination**, including women with disabilities, Romani women, single mothers, pregnant women, widows, older women and LGBTI women.⁵⁴ Among IDPs, the needs of LGBTI persons have been largely ignored, with the exception of efforts made by some NGOs. Romani women "are particularly

⁵² AGORA (IMPACT and ACTED) funded by EU /UN Government of Ukraine, *Eighth periodic report of States parties to the CEDAW Committee*, 2015, CEDAW/C/UKR/8, para. 137.

⁵³ GBV Service Provision in selected communities of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts (January 2021)

⁵⁴ Larysa Baida, et al., *Rights of Persons with Disability in the Armed Conflict in the East of Ukraine*, (Kyiv: Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, 2016)

vulnerable among the displaced, especially when they are pregnant or have to take care of their children,” and many Roma people do not register as IDPs out of fear of being detained, mistreated or targeted in hate crimes.⁵⁵

The government of Ukraine has adopted a **national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security**. The national action plan not only calls for coordination on preventing GBV and rehabilitating survivors, but it offers opportunities to increase women’s engagement in peace building and conflict resolution both as government representatives and civil society actors.⁵⁶ The majority of cases of **conflict-related sexual violence** documented by OHCHR in Ukraine occurred in the context of **the deprivation of liberty by Government forces or armed groups**. In these cases, both men and women are subjected to sexual violence. Beatings and electrocution in the genital area, rape, threats of rape, and forced nudity are used as a method of torture and ill-treatment to punish, humiliate, or extract confessions. Furthermore, to increase the pressure, the perpetrators threatened to also detain or abduct, rape, injure or kill relatives of the victims, especially their children. In the territory controlled by armed groups sexual violence was also used to compel individuals deprived of liberty to relinquish property or perform other actions demanded by the perpetrators, as an explicit condition for their safety and release. The majority of these incidents date back to 2014-2015; nonetheless OHCHR continues to receive testimonies indicating that such practice still occurs on both sides of the contact line and in Crimea.

Last but not least, women in the **East face economic violence as unemployment rates are high among IDPs - almost half of IDPs-45%- have difficulties finding new employment, and in late 2016, 38% of IDPs were unemployed**.⁵⁷ The local labour market in Eastern Ukraine offers few opportunities in general. From recent studies, is clear that female IDPs, especially those with childcare responsibilities and middle-aged women, face particular difficulties finding work in host communities, and are likely to experience “multiple economic discriminatory effects.”⁵⁸

Key challenges for Women nation-wide

- *Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)*

SGBV is widespread and systematic in Ukraine and remains a significant risk for women, children and adolescents, especially in the conflict-affected areas in eastern Ukraine. According to a OSCE 2019 survey, one in seven women in the country say they experienced a form of physical violence at the hands of an adult before they were 15 years old, compared to the average 27% in the EU.⁵⁹

SGBV and domestic violence (DV) remain both among the most widespread and underrated type of offences in conflict-affected areas. The conflict in eastern Ukraine exacerbated SGBV challenges by breaking family support systems and undermining men’s ability to fulfil their traditional gender roles: this led to negative coping mechanisms including intimate partner violence and DV. sexual violence has been reported against conflict-related detainees in both the NGCA and GCA in the conflict-affected area.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ European Roma Rights Centre and the International Charitable Organization Roma Women Fund “Chiricli,” *Written Comments Concerning Ukraine for Consideration by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, (Kyiv and Budapest, 2016), 8.

⁵⁶ USAID Gender Analysis Report (April 2017)

⁵⁷ World Food Program Ukraine Country Office, *Food Security Update*, (Kyiv, 2016)

⁵⁸ USAID Gender Analysis Report (April 2017)

⁵⁹ https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/29thReportUkraine_EN.pdf

⁶⁰ www.osce.org/files/f/1/3/440312_0.pdf and https://www.osce.org/files/f/1/3/444157_0.pdf

Women and girls face the risk of SGBV and associated health burdens, stress and trauma. A UNDP survey found that 72% of women in eastern Ukraine felt safe at home at night, compared to 85% of surveyed men, likely due to their fear of SGBV/DV. Interviewed women were more inclined than men to refer to domestic violence and sexual harassment. Women whose partners participated in the armed conflict are more likely to experience physical or sexual abuse. The lack of shelters, social housing, and safe spaces for SGBV survivors emerged as a major gap in service provision in eastern Ukraine, especially Luhansk Oblast.⁶¹

Children and women are the most vulnerable groups to domestic violence: 45% said that they encountered domestic violence in their childhood (predominantly as a victim), 31% encountered domestic violence in their adulthood, with women having a share greater (39%) than men (22%); 29% of adults would ignore emotional abuse of a female partner by a male one (53% for abuse of a male partner by a female one). There are strong social norms of acceptance of some norms of domestic violence against children – 42% of parents believe that emotional violence against a child is acceptable for educational purposes. In all, 14% accept corporal punishment of children in education. Moreover, 44% of adults believe that witnessing (and 43% of adults believe that being a victim of) domestic violence in childhood does not lead to violent behaviour in adulthood

- *Economic Gender Inequalities*

Despite some progress towards achieving gender equality in Ukraine's labour market, certain factors seem to prevent it from accelerating. Gender-based discrimination in the labour market is one of the most pressing challenges. Women are substantially less likely than men to participate in the labour market, and once in the workforce they are also less likely to find jobs than men; their access to quality employment opportunities remains restricted. Women are mainly employed in the public sector where salaries are generally lower, which leads to horizontal employment segregation. In early 2019, women prevailed in health care and social welfare sectors (83.1% of the number of registered regular employees); in education (78%); in finances and insurance (71.9%); in arts, sports, entertainment and recreation (68%); in public administration and defence sector, compulsory social insurance (67.5%); temporary accommodation and catering (67.3%); professional, scientific and technical services (54.3%); and in wholesale and retail trade (53.5%). Most of these jobs are low paid, except for finance and insurance, as well as public administration and defence where salaries have been rising recently. Because of the gender pay gap, women have limited opportunities to save and are more vulnerable in economic crisis. In Ukraine women are concentrated in low paid sectors (horizontal professional segregation), and at mid and junior levels positions with lower salaries and limited decision-making opportunities (vertical professional segregation). Because of the gender pay gap, women have limited opportunities to save and are more vulnerable in economic crisis.

Systemic and structural gender-based discrimination in the labour market means the average gender pay gap was 22.3% in 2018; in 2019 it went up slightly to 22.8%. Finally, equality in employment is seriously impaired when women are subjected to SGBV. Workplace sexual harassment is both a human right and a health and safety problem, and disadvantages women in connection with employment, including recruitment or promotion.

- *Key barriers to gender equality*

⁶¹ IMPACT, Gender-based Violence service Provision in selected Communities of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts, January 2021.

Progress towards gender equality continues but is hampered by lack of fully disaggregated statistical data, insufficient financial support from the state for gender equality programming and strategies, and the existence of a highly conservative “anti-gender” movements, along with deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes. There are strong social norms of acceptance of some forms of domestic violence.

- *Identify assessments on gender, such as CEDAW-reporting, SDG National Action Plans, UPR, and other relevant gender analysis.*

Country-specific findings and recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), CEDAW Committee and other human rights mechanisms, multilateral environmental agreements, as well as various pieces of UN guidance on “leaving no one behind” provide an important basis for highlighting gaps and corresponding obligations that could be immediately addressed.

- The *CEDAW* Committee in 2017 considered that the continuing armed conflict in the State party, which is entering its fourth year, poses a challenge to the implementation of the CEDAW. Nevertheless, it considers that the implementation of the Convention, especially during times of conflict, is the most effective safeguard to ensure full respect for, and the enjoyment of, women’s rights, given that women are a driving force of the socioeconomic development of the country. The Committee therefore called upon the State party to giving due consideration to general recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post- conflict situations by setting up a special coordination mechanism with all relevant State institutions at all levels, namely the Verkhovna Rada, the provincial authorities, the judiciary and other stakeholders, as well as representatives of civil society and international organisations, currently supporting the State party on its path towards a comprehensive and lasting peace.
- The *CEDAW* Committee in 2017 noted the following progress regarding legislative reforms: the adoption of the Act on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, in 2016 and the Act on Combating Trafficking in Persons, in 2011 as well as the following policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and advancing women’s rights, including the adoption of the following: (a) Programme on the Equality of Rights and Opportunities between Men and Women (2017-2021); (b) Concept of the National Programme on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence (2017-2020); (c) National Plan of Action for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security (2016-2020); (d) Poverty Reduction Strategy (2016-2020); (e) National strategy on human rights and the action plan for its implementation, in 2016; (f) State target programme to combat trafficking, in 2016.⁶²
- The Committee was further concerned at the exacerbation of violence against women in certain areas in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, as well as in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, since the conflict broke out. It is concerned that, notwithstanding the underreporting of cases of sexual violence as a result of stigma and fear of reprisals, among other reasons, there is evidence of many cases of sexual violence in the conflict-affected areas.

- Consider social and behaviour change strategies as a tool to address social and gender norms identified in the analysis.

⁶² CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/8 /2017.

- Eliminating gender-based violence (SGBV) and violence against children and discriminatory gender stereotypes. Amongst other by:
 - i) ensuring access by women victims of sexual violence to comprehensive medical treatment, including emergency contraception and anti-HIV-related medication, mental health care and psychological support provided by health professionals who are appropriately trained to detect sexual violence and treat its consequences, as well as access to forensic testing, and seek the assistance of United Nations agencies and bodies in this regard.
 - ii) providing victims with transformative reparation measures that respond to women's specific needs and address structural inequities underpinning violence against women, in particular sexual violence, and prevent the recurrence of such violence.
 - iii) ensuring that conflict-related sexual violence is comprehensively addressed in any future transitional justice processes, encompassing the full range of judicial and non-judicial measures, including prosecution initiatives, truth-seeking, reparations programmes, institutional reform or an appropriate combination thereof, as well as comprehensive national consultations, in particular with those affected by human rights violations and abuses.
- Promotion of increased participation of women and young people in employment in the public and the private sectors, and women's full participation in the labour market and political participation, are significant economic transformations that could contribute to the country's development and reduce inequalities.
- Specific attention should be paid to addressing the needs of vulnerable groups who are at greatest risk of being left behind (including, among others, women with disabilities, IDP women, women with many children, single mothers and Roma women).
- At the Government level, the key drivers for Gender Equality are appointed as the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality⁶³ – who also received threats in the current employment. The main tasks of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy are: coordination of the work of Ministries, other central and local executive bodies to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men, conducting the monitoring of the accounting by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of the principle of gender equality, assistance in developing state programmes on gender equality and cooperation with international organizations and civil society.
- In addition, the Commissioner has oversight of the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (S/RES/1325), on women, peace, and security aimed at addressing gender issues at all stages of the peace process, including peacekeeping, world-building and post-conflict reconstruction will become one of the vital tasks of the Commissioner. The Commissioner is subordinated to the line Vice Prime Minister. Last year, the Government of Ukraine, for the first time in the history, outlined gender equality as one of its priorities, imposing responsibilities for the implementation of state policy in this sphere on the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine. In addition, the First Lady is championing the Biarritz Partnership process⁶⁴. Despite pushbacks,

⁶³ Currently Ms. Kateryna Levchenko appointed in 2017.

⁶⁴ Advised by Ms Marina Bartena. The Biarritz Partnership was launched by the leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) states at a summit in Biarritz, France, on August 25, 2019, chaired by French President Emmanuel Macron. The initiative is aimed at strengthening the responsibility of the G7 and consolidating the efforts of other states to achieve gender equality

a recent Ukraine legislation on domestic violence⁶⁵ came into force in 2019 criminalising domestic violence and distinguishing between physical, sexual, psychological and economic domestic violence - something previously unseen in Ukraine.⁶⁶

- Coherent UN support, engaging necessary partners and stakeholders, must be leveraged to address key challenges using a human rights-based approach mainstreamed across strategies, policies, budget and programmes, paying special attention to the groups left furthest behind, identified in this analysis. essential in advancing the 2030 Agenda is a continuous commitment to gender equality, the empowerment of women.

Youth

- *Identify key challenges and opportunities for meaningful engagement of youth following the principle of programming not only for, but also with youth. Identify opportunities/ constraints for addressing youth issues.*
- *General challenges*

Ukraine's education system faces longstanding challenges, including low quality learning, inadequate skills, and deteriorating public trust in education. Ukraine spends more of its GDP on education than most EU and OECD countries, but those resources are not used efficiently. Access to early learning remains problematic, particularly in rural areas.

Many children with disabilities are marginalized from mainstream education. In the areas of the country affected by the conflict, boys, girls and teachers living on both sides of the contact line continue to experience its immediate and cumulative impacts and over 400,000 of them are still in need of education-related assistance.

The **COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an unprecedented school and preschool closures in Ukraine**, affecting 5.4 million children and increasing risks to children's education, protection and wellbeing. The pandemic has also deepened existing inequities in access to education, social and other services. Since 2018 Ukraine has been implementing a major education reform programme: *The New Ukrainian School*. Attracting, retaining and continuous training of qualified teachers, along with developing high quality flexible and competency-based curricula, are among the most crucial parts of education reform. However, the reform process has been uneven and additional efforts are needed to ensure its success and continuity.

- *High inactivity of youth caused by skills mismatches*

Ukraine's labour market shows severe signs of non-inclusiveness. Employment indicators have recently worsened disproportionately for youth, women, and rural residents.

Youth unemployment is a key concern. Formal educational attainment in Ukraine is very high. Around 52% of the active population has attained higher education compared to the OECD average of 36% (2015). However, **further education does not lead to better labour market outcomes** as unemployment rates do not vary significantly across groups with different educational attainment. **Companies responding to business surveys regularly report that graduates do not meet their**

⁶⁵ «Ukraine's legislation on domestic violence gets a reboot - but is it enough? », Open Democracy, March 2020

⁶⁶ The law also requires the establishment of shelters, additional hotlines, a unified state register of investigations of domestic violence and social programmes for victims

skills needs, particularly because the economy tends to generate demand for specialized blue-collar jobs. Curricula in **formal education and in training are focused on theory rather than on skills** relevant to the workplace.

- *Key development opportunity: implementing a youth employment plan, transitioning to a formal economy*

Ukraine's competitiveness and productivity remains low (85th/141) with a significant lag in innovation ecosystem and capability (Global Competitiveness Report 2019). Given the declining working age population, brain-drain and emigration, non-inclusiveness of the labour market, skill erosion, overeducation and informal employment, innovative labour market and education policies are required to foster investment in human capital focusing on entrepreneurship as central competence.

The New Ukrainian school (NUs) concept, based on the European competency framework and strongly promoted by the Government, has the potential to boost small and medium entrepreneurship, and support youth and women's self-employment and entrepreneurship in rural areas, in close cooperation with decentralized and empowered local authorities.

Annex 5: Risk Management Matrix

Contextual risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
GoU reform priorities are not maintained amidst a worsening of the political situation	Unlikely	Major	Constant monitoring of the political economy, including at institutional level by UNDP, RDE, DDIS and drawing also upon EU and NATO assessments. Dialogue with GoU at senior level in concert with other donors. Development of scenarios & risk responses.	Major risk in the short to medium term.	Currently very difficult to foresee, but there prevailing opinion is that the status quo will be maintained or possibly improved. How the political economy develops will depend upon the 2019 presidential election and the degree of backing to the winning candidate and the composition of the government. A severe deterioration in the political climate will require reassessment of Danish support. This will be undertaken in consultation with other donors (and international actors).
Deterioration in security situation in the east	Unlikely	Potentially significant	Support political pressure on parties to live up to Minsk II agreement	Major but depends upon extent of escalation.	A severe deterioration is not anticipated but would have major negative implications for local population on both sides of the contact line and for wider reform processes; e.g. the defence reform due to urgent operational requirements having precedence. For humanitarian and recovery activities, it will restrict access.
Further deterioration in COVID-19 pandemic	Likely	Significant	Alignment to travel and health guidelines. Ensure COVID responses are integrated into PSPU planning and monitoring.	Major	Since early 2020 COVID-19 has reduced international travel, local movement, social gathering and interaction with public institutions and offices in accordance with COVID-19 regulations. COVID-19 is expected to remain a factor with wide ranging and negative political, economic, social and health impacts at least for the short term and affecting development programmes.

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Programmatic risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
All PSEs. GoU reform priorities for are not maintained amidst a worsening of the political situation and reduce implementation rates.	Unlikely	Major	Constant monitoring of the political economy and dialogue with GoU at senior level in concert with other donors. Development of scenarios & risk responses that reflect the actual situation. Maintain focus on areas that have political priority and buy-in.	Major risk of delays in the short to medium term if there is a change of government. Key priority areas are likely to remain relevant.	PSE 1 & 3 are focused on major political priorities that are likely to remain constant. However, political instability and/or lack of consensus may be felt in terms of delays in decision making and adjustments to budgets. The severity will depend upon the concrete situation.
All PSEs. Deterioration in security situation in the east	Unlikely	Major	Depending upon the degree of access possible, adjust activities away from the contact line to safe areas. Restrict unnecessary travel. PSE 3 likely to experience slow down in decision-making as leadership focuses on crisis response. PSE 4 may also prove very difficult.	Major but depends upon extent of escalation.	A severe deterioration is not anticipated but would have negative implications for the defence reform process due to urgent operational requirements having precedence. The early 2021 Russian troop movements and previous incidents in the Azov Sea demonstrate the volatility of the situation.
Mainly PSE 1 & 3. GoU partners lack capacity to implement agreed activities and programme	Likely	Major	Capacity development support included in RPP is based on assessment of capacity limitations. Monitoring by UNDP of	Long term risks reduced, although it may not be possible to avoid some knock-on effects for speed (and possibly also extent) of implementation.	Institutional capacity is affected also by political will for reform and this may vary according to the area concerned. High staff turnover will further impact negatively on absorption capacity. Shortfalls in this area are foreseen by the mix of national and direct implementation modality.

progress is thus less strong than expected			implementation & tailoring of delivery (via annual work plan) to assessment of possibly shortfalls. Regular dialogue and joint planning with GoU partners. UNDP to use direct implementation where necessary. PSE 3 to coordinate closely with NATO allies.	UNDP/partners to focus on priority inputs	
PSE 1 & 2. Implementation is not as inclusive as intended (i.e. less involvement of civil society, less outreach to citizens)	Likely	Minor	Ensure that funds are available and allocated for CSO engagement. Ensure that CSO engagement is prioritised in policy and strategies. Maintain dialogue with GoU and local authorities on importance of inclusion and value added from CSOs.	The risk is likely to remain at least in the short term and it may be that participation (while existing) is not as inclusive or unbiased as desired.	Limited capacity amongst CSOs, particularly outside of urban areas. Political climate has not been conducive to extensive engagement, esp on human rights/transparency issues, although post-Maidan, this has improved.
PSE 3 - Sudden changes in deployment plans by partners where Danish contributions form integrated elements	Unlikely	Significant	Maintain forward looking dialogue via bilateral informal/formal contacts (DMD/DCD, units) and ensure commitment to early notice of any changes.	Minor but likely to remain as Denmark is a junior partner in a number of engagement areas. Risk varies and main risks lie with Canadian and British operations.	Some other partners have shorter commitment periods (typically one year) and this makes them vulnerable to changes. This affects 2 engagement areas only (Canada, UK).
PSE 3 - Not possible to identify suitable candidates for advisory positions	Unlikely	Major	DCD to ensure early identification of candidates through existing systems and that rotation	Minor. The short term nature of most positions should enable candidates to be identified.	Defence assistance is not a priority task for DK armed forces and requires that suitably qualified personnel can be identified and released from other tasks.

			arrangements are in place		
All PSEs. Further deterioration in COVID-19 pandemic	Likely	Significant	Alignment to travel and health guidelines. Postpone events/training engagements as necessary. Move to online modalities where possible.	Major	<p>Since early 2020 COVID-19 has reduced international travel, local movement, social gathering and interaction with public institutions and offices in accordance with COVID-19 regulations.</p> <p>COVID-19 is expected to remain a factor with wide ranging and negative political, economic, social and health impacts at least for the short term and affecting development programmes.</p>

Institutional risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
PSEs 1, 2, & 4. Programme funds misused or diverted to other use (Fiduciary and reputational risk for Denmark)	Unlikely	Significant	Zero tolerance for corruption/fraud. For all PSEs transfers will be based on the procedures set out in grant agreements. For PSE 1, UNDP's Programme Implementation Manual (PIM), regularly reviewed and subject to audit. Cases of corruption/misuse would lead to termination of support.	Limited but cannot be excluded.	For PSE 1, the majority of RPP funds are held and managed by UNDP. The funds available for disbursement to CSOs are overseen by UNDP and subject to rules and procedures (PIM), and are relatively small. Similarly for PSE 2, the Danish Lead partner will ensure fiduciary risks are minimised. For PSE 3, Danish state regulations will apply. For PSE 4, HD will apply its own financial procedures, with regular reporting.
All PSEs. Risk of inadvertently causing harm (Reputational risk for Denmark)	Unlikely	Major	Risk assessments undertaken. Capacity building provided to raise awareness. Prioritise transparency	Limited but cannot be excluded	The risks here primarily concern the support ignoring ethnic and/or vulnerable group concerns and thereby exacerbating existing inequalities and/or group tensions. UNDP has a solid approach to DNH and conflict sensitivity as part of its procedures. For PSE 3,

			and accountability. Encourage information flow and monitoring by diverse range of actors.		DCD is not able to security check AFU trainees, so there is a risk that some individuals may have committed human rights transgressions. For PSE 4, there is a risk of dialogue processes being misused by unfriendly actors (spoilers).
PSE 3. Support to AFU institutions by Denmark leads to reputational damage due to human rights shortcomings	Unlikely	Minor	Ensure transparency of Danish support and joint nature with like-minded donors (as part of communication strategy). Reconsider or adjust support if human rights situation does not improve. Promote monitoring of HR performance by AFU and include HR aspects in training and advice/dialogue.	Limited but cannot be excluded	The AFU has been criticised by human rights defenders due to abuses by units in the east. GoU aspirations in relation to human rights protection are not always reflected in reality. Denmark is also supporting the Ombudsperson and CSOs with a human rights focus and this provides added mechanisms to ensure human rights monitoring and protection in relation to international standards. Nonetheless, Denmark could face criticism for supporting AFU that are not seen to be operating effectively to safeguard individual civil and political rights.
PSE 3 - In country support provided to Danish advisors/trainers is insufficient leading to inability to pursue programme objectives and deterioration in relations	Unlikely	Minor	DCD to maintain close dialogue and joint planning with UA MOD/DCD partners and together with close allies.	Minor. Existing experience is that pragmatic solutions can be found enabling support to continue	PSE 3 is dependent upon the good will and interest from UA counterparts. Thus far, this has been positive. However, there is a risk that it may not be maintained at a level enabling the expected results to be achieved and the tensions emerging could damage the relationship with UA partners.

