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Newsletter: a Year at a Glance | [View this email in your browser](#)



We conclude a year that has seen unspeakable human suffering in Ukraine following the Russian Federation military offensive launched on 24 February 2022. With thousands of civilian casualties, millions of people fleeing both inside and outside Ukraine, destruction of critical infrastructure across Ukraine, large scale contamination with explosive remnants of war that will take decades to clear, not to speak of a generation of children and adolescents who have been robbed of their youth. The conflict is leaving deep psychological scars across Ukrainians of all walks of life.

The Danish Refugee Council looks back at a year that has required a tremendous effort across our organisation be that in our HQ in Copenhagen, our Regional Office, or in Ukraine itself to respond to these unprecedented needs. Many of us have been deeply affected personally as my colleague Kostya describes below very vividly but have nevertheless persevered due to an amazing team that has worked day and night to support people in need.

This would not have been possible without the support from our donors and partners who have supported our efforts and for which we are extremely grateful. The Danish Refugee

Council will continue to expand the delivery of life-saving activities in 2023 which would not have been possible without you.

On behalf of the Danish Refugee Council in Ukraine, I wish all of you a good start into 2023 with the most servant wish for peace to return to Ukraine.

Julian Zakrzewski

Country Director,

DRC Ukraine

February 2022 changed everything

Shock and despair – but nevertheless determination and hope. These were among the mixed feelings many people in and around Ukraine experienced in February 2022.

Being a humanitarian worker in your own country is at the same time terribly sad and incredibly meaningful and gives a feeling of relevance. After 24 February, this feeling transformed into gratitude and appreciation. Appreciation of life and the simplest things that were earlier taken for granted. Gratitude to all who are making contributions and sacrifices to protect life and to help provide access to the most basic necessities for some of the millions of the conflict-affected people in Ukraine. This gratitude extends as well to the international community and colleagues who stand by Ukraine, and to the people who are ready to go through hardships and risks to save lives, help the vulnerable and inspire further hope for a better future for Ukraine.

Konstantine Antonets

Head of Support Services,

DRC Ukraine



Protection



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During 2022, DRC's Protection Unit has been able to provide support to over 11,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), conflict-affected people, and host communities. Individual assistance was delivered to people facing protection risks where DRC and partners have worked to reduce or mitigate them. Support has been provided to 32 shelters for IDPs across Ukraine focused on providing people sheltered here with access to necessary equipment and furniture, repairs, and winterisation efforts. In addition, DRC supported Civil Society Organisations that took part in the emergency response covering IDPs' basic needs such as food, hygiene, and other necessities.

DRC supported football festivals for internally displaced children in western Ukraine. Such activities helped children to integrate into the host communities proactively.

DRC protection initiatives were possible thanks to the support of the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF), the European Union through its Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA).

At the end of 2022, DRC reached newly accessible areas and deployed the first of a series of new protection teams in Ukraine's northern Chernihiv Oblast and with more to follow for other areas.

By Viktoria Klimova, DRC Protection Team Lead, Chernivtsi



Protection: Legal Assistance



©DRC Ukraine, July 2022, Olena Vysokolian.

In response to growing legal needs, DRC with 25 local legal aid partners provided more than 20,000 individuals with one-on-one legal counselling, administrative, documentation, and in-court assistance. Nearly 23,000 people received information on relevant rights and entitlements through group awareness sessions. Based on the most prevalent information requests from DRC beneficiaries, DRC, together with partners, developed over 50 types of printed materials on the most pressing legal issues and disseminated them among 43,000 people.

DRC Legal Alerts became the primary source of legal contextual knowledge for most humanitarian actors operating in Ukraine. In 2022, a total of 14 issues were developed and published. Moreover, DRC is developing a Digital Legal Aid Platform. When fully launched in early 2023, the Platform will provide access to legal aid services and materials to the 16 million Ukrainians displaced inside Ukraine and abroad. The Platform will offer guidance and answers to some of the most frequently asked questions that were selected based on real-life requests from IDPs and conflict-affected persons during DRC mobile clinics since the beginning of the war.

In December 2022, DRC conducted two 5-day training sessions for 63 lawyers among local NGOs. The training programme was dedicated to humanitarian principles and rights of conflict-affected populations, international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, the latest legislation developments under martial law, current documentation, Housing, Land & Property, and labour issues of Ukraine, etc.

By Olha Bushtarenko, DRC Legal Aid Unit Project Team Leader, Kyiv



Capacity Building



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Since February 2022, DRC's Capacity Building Programme (CBP) has implemented two projects on assistance to conflict-affected people and support of civil society actors engaged in the humanitarian response in Ukraine.

One project included five mobile teams set up to work on conflict prevention in 37 IDP shelters in Lviv, Rivne, and Zakarpattia Oblasts. In six months, they provided psychological assistance and conflict-related counselling to over 4,000 IDPs and host community representatives. Moreover, this project strengthened the institutional capacity of eight Civil Society Organisations working on the humanitarian response via providing them with individual and organisational capacity-building.

In the second project, funded by the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF), DRC provided the CSOs operating as local humanitarian actors and covering conflict-affected areas throughout Ukraine with capacity-building support. DRC delivered 522 individual psycho-social and mentorship support sessions to 57 staff members of 20 CSOs to enhance their emergency response capacity and performance.

In 2023, DRC will continue responding to the ongoing humanitarian crisis and contributing to the localisation agenda, particularly through supporting local governments and Ukrainian civil society, including youth and women-led CSOs, in their efforts aimed at addressing humanitarian emergencies.



Economic Recovery



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The war in Ukraine continues to impact communities and threaten the lives of millions of people. Active hostilities frequently target eastern and southern parts of the country, with a growing number of reported attempts by civilians to leave the hard-hit areas. Escalation in conflict has dangerously affected the critical infrastructure and sectors (housing, construction, transport, trade, manufacturing, agriculture, etc.) and led to an economic downturn of 32 %.

As of today, DRC continues helping IDPs and conflict-affected people through redesigned activities under the Livelihoods Assistance Programme supported by the governments of Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The Programme aims at ensuring access to income generation via support to self-employment, and cooperation with the private business sector, contributing to the vocational education sector, as well as advocacy and legal services for IDPs and the conflict-affected population throughout Ukraine.

Among the beneficiaries of DRC support are:

- 85 individuals with micro-business grants for restoring or launching their own business and self-employment activities;

- 21 small and medium enterprises received financial assistance for relocation or expansion of business activity with a focus on the preservation and creation of jobs;
- 54 people were supported with vocational education grants;
- five businesses from the agricultural sector received co-investment grants for increasing food production in the target areas;

In cooperation with the GoIT company, DRC launched the pilot initiative – ‘IT education for women’ – aimed at protecting women from economic vulnerabilities, focusing on ensuring access to employment opportunities, specifically in the IT sphere. 130 women have been selected and will graduate after passing the ‘Full-stack’ and ‘UI/UX Design’ courses.

By Olha Dvoeglasova, DRC Economic Recovery Team Leader, Lviv



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Millions of Ukrainians are displaced and, on the move, trying to find a safe place to live. They often bring little or nothing with them. It is, unfortunately, a common situation when a family is forced to flee their home. that there is no room or time to take other than a few necessities. To better cope and to start their lives from scratch in a new location far from home, they need support on many levels, not least financially. Immediately after the crisis erupted in February 2022, DRC provided over 12,500 individuals with multipurpose cash assistance, and over 1,300 families received Cash for rent and Winterisation. This support was possible, in particular, thanks to the Ukraine Humanitarians Fund funding.

As support for non-food items (e.g. hygiene products), DRC handed over 10,600 kits to IDP families. The kits were designed to be enough for one month for a family of three. Moreover, over 2,600 families were supported with winterization & hygiene kits for children.

Internally displaced people often highlighted the need for warm blankets, especially during winter. DRC distributed more than 14,800 blankets to vulnerable families in shelters.

‘We had to flee home because our area was bombed,’ says Viktoria whose house was left in ruins in Mariupol. ‘We have lost all of our belongings, everything was burnt. Upon arrival in Dnipro, we had to start life from scratch. Local activists told us where we can apply for help, and we came to YaMariupol Centre. DRC was registering people there and after a short waiting in line, we received a big bag with hygiene items, a bucket, and blankets for all three of us. Everything was of very good quality! My family is grateful and asks you to keep up this kind of support!’

By Oleh Vyshnevskiy, DRC Livelihoods Project Lead, Dnipro



Humanitarian Disarmament & Peacebuilding



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Demining

DRC resumed Humanitarian Mine Action activities in April 2022 and the teams have already identified 835,798 square metres of Hazardous Areas, cleared 149,549 square metres of contaminated land, and identified 174 dangerous items for disposal by national authorities.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)

DRC reached over 2.2 million people with digital EORE sessions in 23 Oblasts of Ukraine and trained 147 teachers and NGO staff as EORE trainers. Moreover, DRC supported 47 mine victims and their families and trained 112 local duty-bearers on inclusive practices for people with disabilities, including explosive ordnance victims.



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Capacity Building of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES)

DRC provided personal protective equipment and explosive ordnance disposal kits for 10 State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES) teams and technical assistance to the Interregional Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Rapid Response. DRC specialists conducted non-technical survey training for 16 SES staff in Chernihiv Oblast and 16 more in Kharkiv Oblast.

In August 2022, one SES demining team was deployed in Chernihiv Oblast thanks to the DRC support. This team has already cleared 8,700 square meters and detected and disposed of 2,627 items of explosive remnants of war.

DRC's humanitarian mine action activities are funded by the European Union (EU), the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs' Crisis and Support Centre (French MFA), the Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Finland MFA), the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (WRA), and the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO).

By Hanna Reshetnikova, DRC HDP Programme Support Officer, Kyiv

Regional map

