



IN BRIEF



# UN WOMEN UKRAINE: FIVE-MONTH UPDATE

24 FEBRUARY – 14 JULY 2022

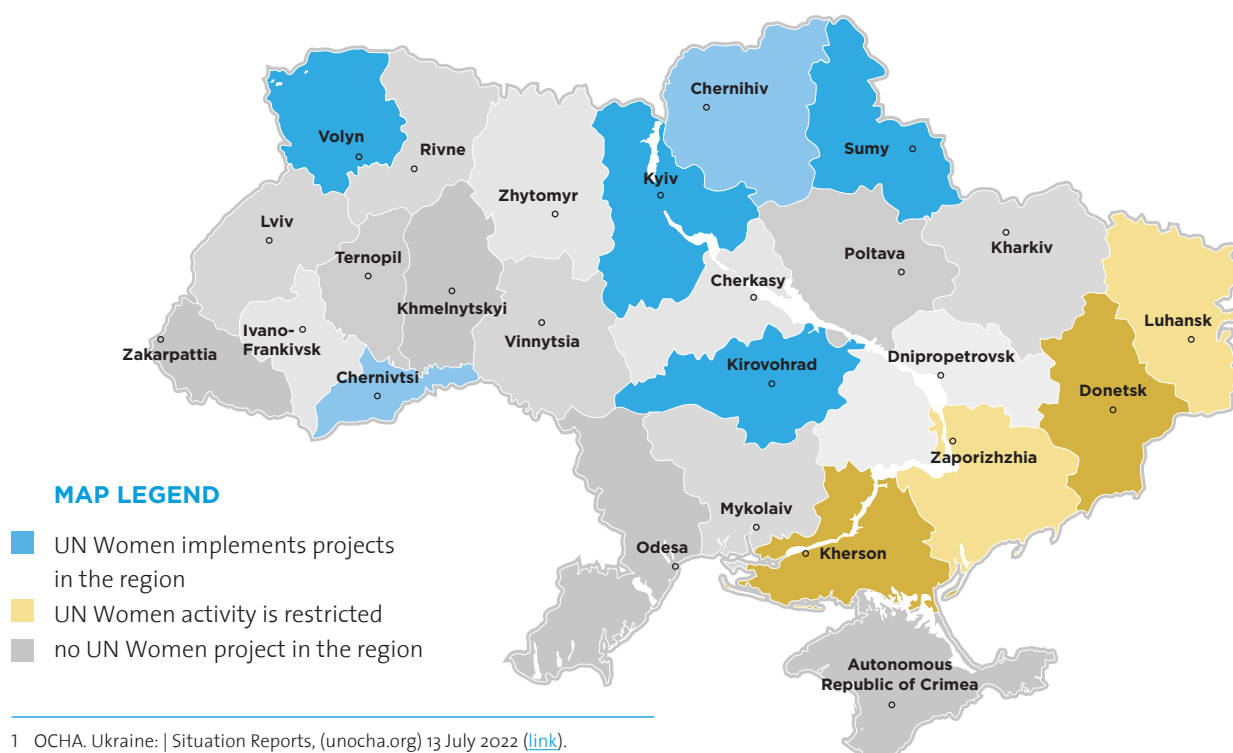
Photo: UN Women

The lives of women and men across Ukraine have been profoundly impacted by the crisis brought on by the escalation to a full-fledged war on 24 February 2022. The needs and priorities of women and men across Ukraine are rapidly evolving, with more than 6.3 million people displaced and at least 15.7 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection.<sup>1</sup> UN Women acted swiftly to ensure that women and girls affected by the war are supported and that the humanitarian response to the crisis is gender sensitive.

This report summarizes UN Women's key areas of progress and results during the first five months of the full-fledged war:

1. Responding to the immediate needs and priorities of women and girls affected by the war
2. Supporting women's CSOs to respond to the crisis, remain operational and adjust to the context
3. Ensuring a gender-sensitive humanitarian response among humanitarian actors
4. Supporting the Government of Ukraine to safeguard and advance gender equality in the context of war

The map below shows the regions (oblasts), where UN Women works. In some areas activity is restricted as certain communities are under heavy shelling or are newly occupied.



1 OCHA. Ukraine: | Situation Reports, (unocha.org) 13 July 2022 ([link](#)).

## Responding to the immediate needs and priorities of women and girls affected by the war

Two rapid gender analyses of Ukraine (RGAs) (29 March and 4 May)<sup>2</sup> were developed by UN Women and CARE International, and highlighted the different impacts of the war on women and men. The recommendations of the reports informed UN Women's immediate support to women and girls.

**13,000+** women acutely affected by the war have been supported in the first five months of the full-fledged invasion by various UN Women interventions, including the following:



**10,900** women have benefitted from immediate **humanitarian support**, such as via the provision of food, water, shelter, medicine and hygiene kits.



**1650** women have received **psycho-social support** to help improve the mental health crisis brought on by the war.



**890** women have had improved **access to information** on protection and socio-economic services.<sup>3</sup>



**910** women have been supported with **legal aid/ awareness**, which will, for example, help them to report protection concerns and cases of conflict-related sexual violence.

The findings of the RGAs emphasized that the ongoing crisis is further exacerbating gender inequities, particularly among women facing multiple forms of discrimination. In order to ensure that no one is left behind and to fully respond to the recommendations of the RGAs, UN Women has emphasized support to women from different vulnerable and marginalized groups via an intersectional lens.

<sup>2</sup> UN Women and CARE. Gender Analysis of Ukraine, 29 March 2022 ([link](#)) and 4 May 2022 ([link](#)).

<sup>3</sup> Note that additionally over 6 million people have engaged with various informational campaigns through UN Women's and partners' social media platforms, including access to information on a wide range of humanitarian services. Read more below under advocacy and communications.



**Immediate psychological support for women taking refuge in Kyiv metro stations and crisis centres**

In total, **1,290** internally displaced women and children received psychological support services in Kyiv during the first three months of the full-fledged war. Twenty psychologists conducted more than **300** group consultations and **200** individual consultations with women and children in crisis centres and facilities and at Kyiv metro stations, which were used to shelter people. In addition, women who work in the critical infrastructure system, district departments of children's services, primary health care centres, social service centres, communal facilities and police departments received psychological training on working with clients in states of psychoemotional crisis and on principles of psychological first aid.

### Examples of support to vulnerable groups of women affected by the war



**Urgent humanitarian support to Roma women**

In the regions of Sumy and Volyn, **115** Roma families, mostly mothers with many children, received immediate humanitarian aid (food and hygiene kits) to cover their basic needs, which have been disrupted by the humanitarian consequences of the war. Roma women are facing many challenges accessing humanitarian aid, services and protection due to discrimination, poor access to information and lack of personal documentation. Mobilization of Roma women is ongoing in local communities to strengthen their participation in the humanitarian response processes.



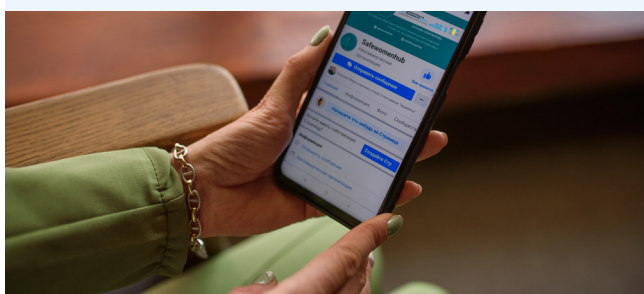




## Survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and at-risk groups of women and girls

In response to numerous violations of women's and girls' rights as a result of hostilities in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health (UFPH), with the support of UN Women has led various instrumental initiatives:

- **561** women and girls have benefitted from Safe WomenHUB online platform<sup>4</sup>, which provides psychological, social and legal services for women and girls affected by the war in Ukraine. The platform is designed to respond to the needs of women and girls displaced across the country who have experienced sexual violence, human trafficking and intimate partner violence. To date, more than **270** women have received psychological counselling (of whom **16** were survivors of war-related sexual violence).
- **400** women from Donetsk and Luhansk have increased their awareness on sexual harassment and its legal qualification, as well as on the available legal aid services, as a result of the dissemination of a leaflet on sexual harassment developed by UN Women and disseminated by UFPH.
- **147** women victims of domestic and gender-based violence, IDPs, and women at risk of such violence from Dnipro, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Kherson, Donetsk, Mykolayiv, Zaporizhzhya, Sumy and Chernigiv have raised their legal awareness of the rights of GBV victims, legal procedures, protection mechanisms and specialised services available for GBV victims as a result of a series of trainings conducted.



“UN Women and Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund's support is very timely and important as war crimes against women and girls are committed. We want to expand our capacities and provide quality psychosocial and legal support to women and girls affected by violence.

— Halyna Skipalska, Director of UFPH



## War-affected women with disabilities

In partnership with the National Assembly of People with Disabilities (NAPD), UN Women and WPHF are supporting **27** women's organizations, including seven Women's Transit Centres, across the country with aid to women with disabilities and female caregivers who have children with disabilities. Through the capacity-building efforts of these organizations and improved access to information, psychological and legal support services, more than **680** women with disabilities and women who have children with disabilities have benefited from immediate life-saving humanitarian support.

In Kharkiv, for example, “The Centre for Rehabilitation of Young People with Disabilities and Their Family Members – The Right to Choose” has been able to deliver humanitarian aid and has supported evacuation efforts for visually impaired persons, who were at acute risk of being left behind.



“The need to help people with disabilities was crucial during the first months of the war. People with disabilities are extremely vulnerable in situations of armed hostilities.

— Natalia Roda, Director of the Western Rehabilitation and Sport Centre

<sup>4</sup> SafeWomenHUB platform via Telegram ([link](#)).



### Displaced women living with HIV

In partnership with CSO “Positive Women”, UN Women and WPHF are committed to strengthening the security, protection and mental health of women living with HIV and those at increased risk due to the insecurity caused by the war. Positive Women is currently creating safe spaces (shelters) for women living with HIV and their children in four locations across Ukraine and is facilitating access to services in the sphere of health care and social welfare.

To date, more than **50** women and children living with HIV have been supported with access to temporary accommodation, the provision of basic goods and necessities such as meals, water, personal hygiene products, clothes, vital medications and/or psychological support, consultations on treatment, and legal advice.



“For the community of women living with HIV in Ukraine, support from UN Women/WPHF is an absolute indicator of effectiveness and cohesion amidst war. Thanks to the rapid response of WPHF and the funds received, women and women with children were evacuated from the area of active hostilities and will be able to reach safe places (shelters) in Ivano-Frankivsk, Cherkasy, Chernivtsi and Khmelnytsky.

— Olena Stryzhak, Chairwoman of the NGO “Positive Women”



### Digital literacy support for women to ensure they are not left behind

Eighty librarians from **13** local communities and Kyiv city were trained to provide consultations to vulnerable groups of women on gaining digital skills, using the State’s digital services and accessing the information on humanitarian aid and available protection assistance. In particular, the website “#знаю\_виживу” (#i\_will\_survive)<sup>5</sup> and an online guide of useful resources were developed and disseminated to provide information on life-saving solutions to vulnerable groups of women during the war.

“Previously, my help at work was mainly for adult readers and colleagues offline. After 24 February, at first, there were a few questions about applications or assisting mothers with children in searching for information. Then there were more and more requests for various kinds of information. I repeatedly sent the link to the #знаю\_виживу (#i\_will\_survive) website upon request and distributed it in groups.

— Woman librarian

## Supporting women’s CSOs to respond to the crisis, remain operational and adjust to the context

The “Rapid Assessment: Impact of the War in Ukraine on Women’s Civil Society Organizations” (14 March)<sup>6</sup>, conducted by UN Women, highlighted the many needs and priorities of women’s CSOs, and largely informed UN Women’s approach to supporting local women’s organizations.



**19** women’s CSOs have been able to remain operational and accelerate their work during the first few months of the full-fledged war, with technical and/or financial support from UN Women. This support has been vital to ensure that women’s CSOs are able to continue their important work and to support women and girls in local communities impacted by the war.

5 Website “#знаю\_виживу” (#i\_will\_survive) ([link](#)).

6 UN Women. Rapid Assessment: Impact of the War in Ukraine on Women’s Civil Society Organizations ([link](#)).



**20 CSOs have benefitted from capacity development and have increased knowledge of gender in humanitarian action** (GiHA), the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in the context of war. This has been vital as many organizations are pivoting their work to respond and adjust to the new environment, conditions and needs.



**USD 850,000** has been directed from UN Women to women's CSOs in the first five months of the war. Continued funding for women's CSOs is crucial to ensure that they can continue to carry out life-saving front-line efforts and be fairly compensated for their contributions.



### Community mobilization and women's leadership

Since 2018, UN Women has worked closely with Ukrainian Women's Fund (UWF) to mobilise local women into self-help groups and support them to set up local development initiatives and advocate to authorities about their needs and priorities. Over **1400** women have participated in activities with self-help groups over the years and been active leaders and gender equality advocates in their communities. With the escalation of war, many of these women stepped into leadership roles and leveraged the self-help groups and tools in front-line grassroots work.



**“ War is not only challenges but also new opportunities. Every woman who takes responsibility during the war becomes a leader.**

— Larysa Kobelyanska, speaker at the Ukrainian Women's Congress in June 2022, supported by UN Women



**“ I am in contact with all of the women who we have been working with in Zaporizhzhia. They have all moved, but all have remained leaders. As soon as they arrive and secure accommodation for their families, they join the ranks of local volunteers, applying the Community Mobilization for Empowerment (CME) methodology we taught them. They prepare gender profiles of the communities, identify the needs of the most vulnerable and help arrange the necessary services for them.**

— Anastasia Perepelytsia, Coordinator in Zaporizhzhia with UWF



### Young women for peace and security

Displaced all over the country, young women from Donetsk and Luhansk have actively lobbied their local public authorities on the needs and challenges faced by young women and have proposed measures aimed at integrating young, displaced women into host communities. Young women activists have been leading volunteering efforts, aiding people affected by the war in their home and host communities and showcasing their leadership capability. UN Women has provided support to young women by:

- Providing capacity development support to young women's CSOs in their advocacy work and how to raise awareness on issues affecting young women, for example, to the Donetsk and Luhansk Young Women's Peacebuilders Networks



- Generating research and evidence on the needs and priorities of young women affected by the war, including the report “Challenges Encountered by Young Women Affected by the War in Ukraine”,<sup>7</sup> developed together with the NGO Internews Ukraine
- Facilitating advocacy initiatives for young women to voice their concerns and demands

See a powerful [video](#)<sup>8</sup> on the important contributions of young women during the war.



У той же час молоді жінки відіграють різноманітні ролі під час війни: очолюють домогосподарства, освоюють нові навички, роблять внесок у миробудову та відновлення місцевих громад.

and contributing to peacebuilding and restoring local communities.

“ Now in 2022, the role of young women cannot be underestimated. We are the agents of change, and we have to tap into our potential and engage meaningfully in recovery and peacebuilding processes at the local, national and global levels.

— Young displaced woman activist

## Ensuring a gender-sensitive humanitarian response

A key priority of UN Women has been to support humanitarian and development actors to ensure a gender-sensitive response to the crisis. This has included:

- The production of **rapid gender analyses (RGAs)**<sup>9</sup> for actors to make informed decisions on the immediate response to the crisis. The reports have included specific recommendations across all sectors, advocating appropriate recourse

and attention to the different needs of women and men. The reports have been widely disseminated and quoted in media<sup>10</sup> and humanitarian reports,<sup>11</sup> as well as in high-level international meetings.<sup>12</sup> Most importantly, the RGAs informed the development and update of the UN Flash Appeal for Ukraine (updated in April 2022),<sup>13</sup> ensuring that women and girls are adequately prioritized and supported in the humanitarian response to the crisis.



[UN Women: Impact of War on Women's CSOs Mid-March 2022](#)



[UN Women and CARE Rapid Gender Analysis Late March 2022](#)



[UN Women and CARE Rapid Gender Analysis Early May 2022](#)



[UN Women and Internews: Challenges Encountered by Young Women Affected by the War in Ukraine Late May 2022](#)

<sup>7</sup> UN Women and Internews Ukraine. Challenges Encountered by Young Women Affected by the War in Ukraine ([link](#)).

<sup>8</sup> Video on young women's contributions during the war ([link](#)).

<sup>9</sup> Analyses: (1) Rapid Assessment: Impact of the War in Ukraine on Women's Civil Society Organizations ([link](#)); (2) Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine, 29 March ([link](#)) and 4 May ([link](#)); and (3) Challenges Encountered by Young Women Affected by the War in Ukraine ([link](#)).

<sup>10</sup> More than 20 media articles highlighted the RGA results in the first two weeks after publication, including Forbes ([link](#)) and IPS ([link](#)).

<sup>11</sup> For example, ReliefWeb ([link](#)) and UN News ([link](#)).

<sup>12</sup> Including at the UN Security Council ([link](#)).

<sup>13</sup> OCHA. Ukraine Flash Appeal (March–August 2022) [EN/RU/UK] ([link](#)).

- The establishment and facilitation of the **Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) sub-group, which brings together more than 40 individuals from UN agencies, humanitarian clusters, CSOs and INGOs**, including four local women's organizations. The aim of the GiHA sub-group is to build the capacity of humanitarian actors on gender and provide technical input into key humanitarian documents to ensure that gender is well mainstreamed. To date, this has included:
  - Disseminating the findings and recommendations from the RGAs across humanitarian clusters (including via presentations to the clusters on Health, Protection, GBV, Food Security and Livelihoods, and Shelter)
  - Providing technical input into humanitarian planning documents such as the UN Winterization Strategy, and developing a technical note (Gender Alert) on how the humanitarian response can address the gender needs of internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons and the risks they face (in progress).
  - Providing technical input on gender mainstreaming into the 3rd round of OCHA proposal selections under the Ukrainian Humanitarian Fund

“The GiHA sub-group is instrumental in ensuring a gender-responsive and inclusively coordinated humanitarian response in Ukraine. The membership and coordination structure is designed to amplify the voices of women's civil society organizations in key humanitarian decision-making bodies, including the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and to build bridges between international and local actors to achieve shared objectives on gender equality and inclusion. Evidence generated from the Rapid Gender Assessments facilitated by UN Women and CARE via the GiHA sub-group has informed cluster-led needs assessments and Flash Appeal planning, and it will feed into the Humanitarian Needs Overview and the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan. The GiHA sub-group also provides a critical platform for facilitating systematized collaboration between gender equality and inclusion with inter-agency work streams on the accountability to affected people (AAP) and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

— Analee Pepper, Senior Gender Advisor at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

- Conducting capacity development activities for humanitarian actors, including a training session on gender in the humanitarian program cycle and use of the IASC Gender and Age Marker in humanitarian programming (120 participants).

## Supporting the Government of Ukraine to safeguard and advance gender equality in the context of war

UN Women continues working with the Government of Ukraine at all levels (national, regional and local) to provide support in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and safeguarding the rights of women and girls, especially during times of ongoing crisis caused by the war. During the five months since the escalated invasion began, the following key steps were taken:

- The Government of Ukraine, through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, began work on revising the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325 (on the Women, Peace and Security agenda). With the support of UN Women, a series of consultations with more than 240 women and men from government agencies and civil society was organized, and suggested input for revisions was provided. For the first time, the draft revisions include key provisions on anti-trafficking and emphasize the additional needs of women in times of war, such as gender-responsive infrastructure (including bomb shelters), employment, psychological assistance for women affected by the war and the mainstreaming of women's needs into peace negotiations. The revised National Action Plan is expected to be approved by the Government in the coming months.
- Authorities have also improved their knowledge of gender in humanitarian contexts through various trainings organized by UN Women, which engaged participants from national-level ministries (including the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Communities and Territories Development, the Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, and the National Agency of Ukraine for Civil Service) and regional/local authorities (including representatives from the Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Government Authorities, Kyiv City Administration, and local territorial communities/hromadas).
- The Government of Ukraine ratified the Istanbul Convention (July 2022). This is an important achievement, which will further safeguard women and girls from violence and ensure robust prevention and response mechanisms. Over the past 4 years, UN Women has been working closely with

UN agencies and development partners to advocate for its ratification. UN Women is currently providing technical input to the DPMO to review the national legislation and ensure compliance and alignment with the convention.



### Tackling conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)

In the context of the UN and Government Framework of Cooperation on Preventing and Responding to CRSV (signed on 4 May 2022), UN Women has partnered with the Ukrainian Women Lawyers Association “JurFem” to support the prevention of and response to CRSV in Ukraine.

- Twenty-five people (16 women, 6 men, 3 girls ) have benefited from free **legal advice** on CRSV (mostly with assistance to women victims of sexual and gender-based violence).
- Sixty-two representatives of the Government and CSOs (48 women, 13 men) gained advanced **knowledge about CRSV**, with 94 per cent of participants reporting an improved understanding of CRSV and enhanced skills to respond to such incidents.
- Representatives from three government institutions and three CSOs participated in a **multi-stakeholder dialogue** (20 June) on the challenges of legal advice for CRSV survivors and possible solutions. The dialogue and advocacy event engaged 660 online viewers.<sup>14</sup>
- More than 5,000 people accessed printed **materials about CRSV**, and over 18,000 people engaged with online materials aimed to raise awareness and increase knowledge about CRSV, including information on reporting and referral systems as well as available services.
- A total of 4,094 website users and 629,000 social media users (Facebook, Instagram, Telegram) learned about CRSV in an interview with a female human rights activist, writer and co-founder of JurFem in two **media articles** by Wonderzine Ukraine.<sup>15</sup>



Any violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, is about power relations and dominance. Perpetrators want to demonstrate their power; they want to prevail... The violence against women and girls that denies a woman's agency cannot be neglected as something unimportant.

— Larysa Denysenko, Ukrainian legal expert



### Police prevention and response to GBV

In order to prevent and respond to GBV, and ensure that police interventions are gender responsive, UN Women has been working with the National Police of Ukraine since 2018. This collaboration has involved developing training materials and handbooks for police officers and conducting a series of capacity development activities in order to promote gender sensitivity among the police officers at the local level.

In June 2022, 25 staff (13 women, 12 men) of the Human Rights Department under the National Police of Ukraine strengthened their knowledge of gender-responsive policing, particularly on the practical application of a survivor-centred and perpetrator-focused approach on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls. The training provided an ideal opportunity for the Human Rights Department officers to come together for the first time since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion in Ukraine for a two-day in-person training.



<sup>14</sup> Information about the dialogue and advocacy event ([link](#)).

<sup>15</sup> Interviews with Larysa Denysenko at Wonderzine ([link](#)) and UN Women ([link](#)).





### Gender-responsive policymaking and strengthened social cohesion in local host communities

With the high influx of internally displaced women and men into new communities across Ukraine, it is vital that their needs are incorporated with sensitivity into the local planning and decision making by authorities. During the first 5 months since the escalation of war, 200 representatives from local authorities of host communities (Dnipro, Luhansk, Donetsk, Lviv) and women IDPs strengthened their understanding of mainstreaming gender into local programs and budgets through several trainings, ensuring that the differentiated needs of women and men IDPs are addressed in local policymaking. 148 representatives from local self-governments across Ukraine also improved their knowledge of conducting gender analyses in the context of war, which is key to help inform local decision-making, through a online webinar. Additionally, 257 participants (162 IDPs and 95 representatives of local authorities in host communities) participated in a series of dialogues aimed at strengthening the social cohesion between the host communities and IDPs and prevent violence against IDP women and girls.

## Advocacy, communications and normative work

During the first five months of the full-scale war in Ukraine, UN Women has led various online campaigns and advocacy efforts to highlight women's leadership role in the war, the different needs and priorities of women and men, and useful tools, resources and services that can support women affected by the war.

**Total number of people who have engaged with UN Women Ukraine social media advocacy and campaigns:**



**10.5 mln**

people engaged with content on Facebook



**1.4 mln**

people engaged with content on Instagram



**2.3 mln**

people engaged with content on TikTok

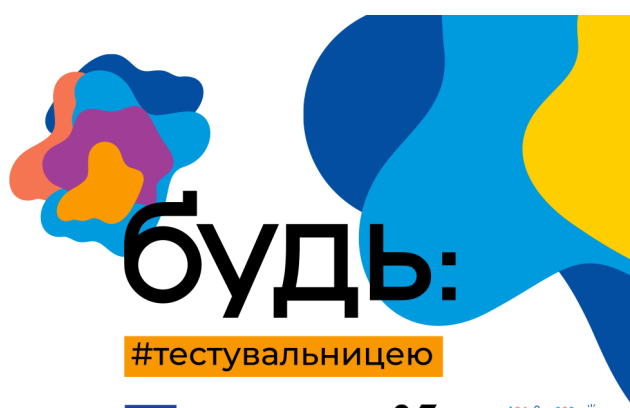
### Examples of key social media campaigns

- “If not us, then who?": Advocacy campaign on women's leadership and contribution during the crisis



The advocacy campaign “Як не ми, то хто?” (“If not us, then who?") aimed to document the war's impact on women, highlight women's leadership and reflect women's contribution to the humanitarian response and peace and security efforts. The campaign featured many powerful stories of women's important contribution and leadership and reached more than 6 million people on social media.

- “BE”: Career advice for Ukrainian women forced to move or who have lost their jobs due to the war



In response to the emerging needs of women and girls due to the war, the organization INSCIENCE created and launched the platform “БУДЬ” (“BE”),<sup>16</sup> designed to help Ukrainian women get jobs in information technology (IT) and creative industries. The platform hosts mentors and experts from the best Ukrainian and global companies who can support women in their job search. The БУДЬ campaign includes a series of six weekly webinars with human resources specialists, IT experts and psychologists on the UN Women Ukraine Facebook page. The goal is to provide knowledge and practical advice on career development in IT and creative industries to Ukrainian women who were forced to move or lost their jobs due to the war. The current number of mentors enrolled in the programme is 120, the current number of mentees is 500, and 10 of them already have a new job. The project has had the attention of more than 1 million people on social media.

- **#NoMoreGringe: TikTok campaign to raise awareness of war stress, trauma and self-care tools for young women and girls**

The TikTok campaign #NoMoreGringe aimed to explore how young women and girls experience trauma differently and promoted self-help tools for young people using smartphones, including the Telegram chatbot “Mindcraft\_UA”, a personal



stress-relieving assistant.<sup>17</sup> The campaign included 45 videos delivered by 15 influencers, who attracted teens’ attention to the necessity of mental self-care as a vital element of PTSD prevention and response. In 2022, the #NoMoreGringe communication campaign has had more than 2.3 million views on TikTok, and more than 20,000 people are using the Mindcraft\_UA self-help chatbot.

16 БУДЬ/BE platform ([link](#)).

17 Mindcraft\_UA chatbot via Telegram ([link](#)).

## Thank you!

UN Women is grateful to the incredible ongoing efforts of humanitarian and development partners, as well as the Government of Ukraine for its ongoing support and dedication to gender equality. A special thank you goes to local women’s civil society groups, which are working tirelessly and are proving to be incredible partners during this challenging time.

UN Women’s response to the full-fledged war and ongoing efforts to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in Ukraine, is made possible by the generous financial contributions from the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, as well as the European Union and the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF). Thank you also goes to the UN Women National Committees of Germany, Finland and Iceland.

To learn more about UN Women’s ongoing efforts in Ukraine, please get in touch at [unwomen.ukraine@unwomen.org](mailto:unwomen.ukraine@unwomen.org)