
ISF Women, Peace and Security Helpdesk

Gender and Conflict Analysis of the Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on Women and Girls

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Researcher: Olena Suslova

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Table of contents

Introduction	4
Methodology	4
Limitations of this approach	5
General Trends	7
Existing Research on the Impact of the War on Women and Girls	7
Girls	8
Military Partners	9
Returnees	10
Impact on women's participation in decision making	10
How has the war affected women's lives in specific spheres?	12
Security and Defence	12
Women in the Armed Forces	12
Gender Sensitivity in Military Training	13
Stereotypes	14
Women's Leadership and Mentorship	14
Communication	14
Rehabilitation and Burnout Prevention	15
Transition from Military to Civilian Career	15
Women Veterans	15
Housing	16
Stabilisation and Recovery	16
Economic Sustainability	18
Humanitarian Aid	20
Organisation of Donor Support	23
Conclusions and Recommendations	24
Women's Participation	24
Stabilisation and Recovery	25
Economic Recovery	25
Humanitarian Assistance	28

Introduction

“The gender equality movement in Ukraine has historically demonstrated strength, and the impact of war has only magnified its power”, explained Levchenko (the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy), when asked about the effects of the war on Ukraine’s progress towards gender equality. Indeed, Ukraine had made substantive gains on women’s rights in recent years: “Even in the wake of a full scale invasion, Ukraine ratified the Istanbul Convention, and updated its National Action Plan 1325 to address the evolving challenges of war”. The country has been an example for adopting, conducting training on, and monitoring a National Action Plan during ongoing conflict: Ukraine adopted its first National Action Plan on WPS during Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, and updated it in 2022 to respond to the most urgent needs born from the full-scale invasion.¹

This report presents an overview of the impact of the war in Ukraine on women and girls. Drawing on existing analyses and original empirical research conducted for the task, the report presents key findings on the gendered effects of the war in a way that supports gender-sensitive policy making.

Methodology

The report is guided by the following questions, co-created with the researcher:

1. What evidence exists on how Russia’s war on Ukraine has been affecting women’s and girls’ rights and their security?
2. How has the Russian war against Ukraine affected the participation of women in decision making?
3. How has the Russian war against Ukraine affected women’s and girls’ lives in all spheres of society? With specific attention to:
 - a. Security and defence
 - b. Stabilisation and recovery
 - c. Economic resilience
 - d. Humanitarian aspects (focus on shift to development work)
4. How are the needs of women and girls assessed and met after 2.5 years of large-scale invasion?

This assessment is based on a wide range of primary and secondary data collected through desk research and interviews conducted between September and November 2024.

The data collection can be grouped into several primary sources:

¹ NATO, ‘Women Defenders of Ukraine,’ June 2024, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/6/pdf/2406-WPS-HS-Bulletin-6-en.pdf p. 6.

- Existing surveys and studies conducted between September 2023 and October 2024 by CARE, UN Women, NATO, other international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), individual gender experts, etc. Roughly 50 sources were reviewed, 30 of which are cited in the analysis.
- 14 online primary data collection surveys between 10 October and 5 November 2024.
- Gender-disaggregated analysis conducted where applicable data were accessible.

Limitations of this approach

There are several limitations to this research, resulting from time constraints, the rapid nature of this query, and a lack of documented evidence on the impact of war in all spheres of life.

- The focus on reports and research for one year is due to the rapid dynamics of the war and, accordingly, the dynamics of the impact of the war on women and girls.
- Statistics during martial law are classified information. Focusing on identifying patterns and trends in impacts is therefore more appropriate.
- Reviewed documents are of variable quality, with some challenges around use of unvalidated data, replacing facts with assumptions, etc. In such cases, relevant comments were used as ‘from anecdote’, ‘assumptions of researchers’, etc.
- Even when looking only at one type of gender-based violence, such as domestic violence, drastic differences in counting become visible. For instance, the National Police of Ukraine “registered 349,355 cases of domestic violence from January to May 2023, compared with 231,244 over the same period in 2022 and 190,277 in the first five months of 2021.² Meanwhile, the Prosecutor General’s Office reports that there were 3,622 domestic violence cases initiated in 2023, compared to 2,080 in 2022”.^{3,4}
- The difference between data stems from differences in counting methods, sources of data, etc., illustrating the problem of data availability.
- The issue of the quality of analytical documents has been a subject of discussion within the expert community in Ukraine for a while now. Numerous research papers and reports have been announced, yet, during the validation process, many critical comments have been raised, which were neither corrected nor published.
- A governmental official mentioned that “all results from project assistance provided by international donors must be made public. Analytical products prepared by think

² UNFPA, ‘Ukraine Emergency Situation Report #20,’ 15 September 2023, <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/ukraine-emergency-situation-report-20-15-september-2023>.

³ Denis Bulavin, ‘In Recent Years, the Number of Domestic Violence Cases in Ukraine Has Increased,’ Hromadske, 11 January 2024, <https://hromadske.ua/posts/za-ostanni-roki-v-ukrayini-pobilshalo-sprav-pro-domashnye-nasilstvo>. Respondents explain the decrease in numbers for the first nine months of 2022 by the following factors: shock from the invasion, which pushed domestic violence issues to the background; lack of knowledge among victims about where to seek help (for example, among IDPs); absence of support services for victims and trained police officers; lack of resources for collecting data in temporarily occupied territories and along the front line.

⁴ Galina Kotlyuk, ‘The Hidden Front of the Russian War: Fighting Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine,’ (trans), Global Public Policy Institute, July 2024, https://gppi.net/media/Kotliuk_2024_Hidden_Front_of-Russias_War_UKR.pdf p. 5.

tanks, civil society organizations, international organizations, and government agencies should be validated and verified by working groups consisting of stakeholders and beneficiaries' representatives”.

Since the onset of the full-scale invasion, chronic problems with quality have intensified, and new factors have emerged,⁵ including:

- Lack of qualified experts,
- Short-term projects and absence of sustained support,
- Inflexible financial support conditions, and
- A lack of understanding of the context from international actors.

Efforts by Ukrainian experts to explain why such approaches are ineffective are often ignored, demonstrating the absence of context sensitivity among international donors and partners.

⁵ Ibid. p. 8-10.

General Trends

Russia's rapidly changing dynamics in how it conducts war against Ukraine, coupled with the now prolonged nature of the war, have led to a similarly rapid pace of change in its overall impact on the needs of women and girls. Assessing trends and responding to them in a timely manner is key to effective strategic and tactical planning for different target groups.

Overall, the state of Ukrainian society can now be described as "Ukrainians are tired of the war, but still resolutely determined to win".⁶ This requires deliberate efforts to reduce the impact of negative trends and strengthen the positive ones.

A governmental official mentioned that:

We have moved past the state of shock—today, surprise has shifted to exhaustion, and accordingly, measures and resources for recovery must be intensified.

An NGO worker mentioned that:

Over the past two years, some trends have declined. For example, activity levels have decreased due to burnout, changes in roles, and the militarization of society, which has led to greater emphasis on the role of men as protectors. The exploitation of reproductive roles is evident, with the idea that 'having a third child will allow us to leave Ukraine' being promoted. Reproductive pressure affects multiple levels.

A governmental official mentioned that:

I do not see a societal mechanism for addressing these issues—how to solve them and what actions to take. Everyone is dealing with it independently. ...Collective action is missing. ... Difficult topics, including gender issues, should be communicated openly within society.

Existing Research on the Impact of the War on Women and Girls

As noted above, while the state of war is ongoing, it is difficult to access reliable data on its impact. However, there are a number of reports that have sought to understand the situation in Ukraine.

The survey 'Impact of the War on Women's Opportunities: Research Results', conducted by Cedos, an independent think tank, one year after the start of the full-scale invasion, highlighted the following strategies and trends:⁷

⁶ 'Ukrainians are tired of war, but still determined to win,' (trans) 25 October 2024, <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3919945-ukrainci-vtomilisa-vid-vijni-ale-nezminno-nalastovani-na-peremogu.html>.

⁷ Elizabeth Hassai, 'The impact of war on women's opportunities: research findings' (trans) Cedos, 3 July 2023, <https://cedos.org.ua/vplyv-vijny-na-mozhlyvosti-zhinok/> p. 36.

The main strategies were quite obvious: changes in approaches to organizing work time, acquiring various gadgets that enabled work during power outages and/or internet issues, and finding places where work could be done more productively.

After a year, these strategies had lost their urgency because effective practices for addressing these problems had already been developed and implemented. Another report, produced by Gradus Research Company, noted how role changes related to the impact of the war on women are more enduring in nature.

The war has undoubtedly changed and expanded the functions of all women and increased their workload. Research results show that among the three groups of respondents (IDP [internally displaced persons]; wives of military personnel; those who returned from abroad), the lives of wives of military personnel have changed the most. 54% of them reported an increase in financial responsibilities, 62% felt a greater responsibility for raising children, and 63% began to plan family life more actively.⁸

Further, a Ukrainian independent socio-political and analytical online publication, in its information on 'How War Destroys the Dating Scene for Women in Ukraine',⁹ identified complications in building long-term relationships for women and men as a result of changes in gender roles in society arising as a result of war.

The impacts of the war on the lives of women and girls are evident and will have long-term consequences for the recovery process, human capital restoration, and other societal processes.

The situation overview highlighted those who—for the state, civil society organisations, and donors—remain somewhat 'in the shadow of war; that is, the programmes, projects, and activities directed toward them are either insufficient or entirely absent due to the absence of specific thematic reports and studies', a point made by an interviewee and repeatedly mentioned by others. A government official noted that "thorough academic research is especially important now when statistical data is not being disclosed", asking "how can policies be built without data?"

Existing research that has been produced on the situation in Ukraine highlights the diversity among women, and the distinct challenges they face, reinforcing the need to take an intersectional approach to gender that includes other characteristics such as youth, disability, and ethnicity. In the context of war, there are a number of different characteristics that can contribute to women's vulnerability or to their specific needs. Identifying and responding to these different groups must be part of an effective approach to implementing changes.

Girls

In terms of jurisdiction girls falls under the remit of both UNICEF (based on age) and UN Women (based on gender).

⁸ Gradus Research Company, 'Changing roles: how the war affected the family life of Ukrainian women,' (trans) October 2023, <https://gradus.app/uk/open-reports/changes-roles-how-war-has-affected-family-life-ukrainian-women>.

⁹ Texty, 'How war is destroying the dating scene for women in Ukraine — NYT' (trans) 5 August 2024, <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/113103/yak-vijna-rujnuje-sferu-znajomstv-dlya-zhinok-v-ukrayini-nyt/>

UNICEF has a Gender Policy (2021-2030)¹⁰ and a Gender Action Plan (2022-2025),¹¹ but both documents are framework-based, adopted before the full-scale invasion, and do not address the problems faced by girls after 24 February 2022. UNICEF supports teenage girls' social clubs in Ukraine,¹² but there is limited detailed information on this initiative, and communication is only one aspect of addressing this target audiences' issues. UN Women mentions girls and women in all of its communications in accordance with its mandate, but there have been no specific programmes for girls since the start of the full-scale invasion.

Plan International conducted a study, 'Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices from Ukraine, Poland, and Romania', analysing responses to questions about experiences of danger situations in those countries due to the escalation of the war. Responses included participation and mobilization efforts in addressing safety, socio-economic and cultural issues affecting their lives, but they also envision a peaceful and inclusive future for Ukraine and its recovery.¹³

Work with girls is mostly carried out only if it had begun before the full-scale invasion. An NGO worker mentioned:

Girls have joined our coalition 1325. As a regional youth council, we have worked with them before. Girls are more active. We involve them. What can we do for girls? Leadership, positioning, not being afraid to stumble, achieving their goals—this is very important to them.

In terms of more marginalised communities and their girls, an international organisation worker said:

The education of Romani girls is crucial at this time. Internally displaced Romani families did not send their children to school due to stigma. They have seen videos of children being beaten. Some do not speak Ukrainian and lack proper preparation. School directors are reluctant to accept these children.

Military Partners

A group that has remained 'in the shadow of war' is the 'women who wait'. In the study 'The Warrior's Beloved Path', a partial list of such women appears in the section 'Who We Didn't Interview but Should Have'.¹⁴ These women include various categories who are directly impacted by the mobilisation of men into the armed forces as a result of the war. For example, the traditional category of military wife includes those who are wives of prisoners of war, whose husbands are missing in action, or have been killed in service.

However, there are also other categories with different needs, including, for example, men whose wives/partners are serving in the military and/or are veterans; individuals (women and men) who have divorced military members and veterans; LGBTQ+ partners

¹⁰ UNICEF, 'UNICEF Gender Policy 2021-2030,' <https://www.unicef.org/reports/unicef-gender-policy-2021-2030>

¹¹ UNICEF, 'Gender Action Plan, 2022-2025,' <https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality/gender-action-plan-2022-2025>

¹² Facebook, 'UNICEF supports 13 social clubs for teenage girls in Sumy region,' (trans) <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=846039770812145>

¹³ Plan International, 'Teenage Girls in Crisis: Voices from Ukraine, Poland and Romania,' (trans)

https://plan-international.org/uploads/2024/08/AGiC-Ukraine_Research-Report-Ukrainian-FINAL.pdf
¹⁴ 'The Warrior's Beloved Path,' Veteran Hub, <https://veteranhub.com.ua/analytics/shlyah-kohanoyi-voyina/>

and partners of military personnel who left active duty due to criminal charges resulting in imprisonment or restriction of freedom.

Finally, there are also those whose relationships fall outside the temporal scope of the study, such as those whose relationships began only after the full-scale invasion, or whose partners served before 2014.

Such details are essential to recognise the multiplicity of target groups who, due to the war, have found themselves in vulnerable situations and in need of support. It also helps identify and address their specific needs.

Returnees

While there has been significant attention paid both to female soldiers and to the wives of soldiers serving on the frontlines, women have been the majority of those displaced from their homes as a result of the war. It is therefore necessary to understand how this process of displacement and return has impacted women.

An NGO worker noted:

Women who have returned to Ukraine require attention. These women consciously returned with their children, intending to do everything for Ukraine. Some realized they felt more at home and wanted to bring positive aspects from the countries they stayed in to support Ukraine's recovery. They often shift to new fields of activity.

The second category is women whose husbands were drafted over the past year. These women have experienced multiple stages—from despair and denial to acceptance and increased family involvement. They often consider career changes, feeling empowered through their suffering.

Third is internally relocated women without IDP status. Although few, these women often pursue their dreams actively, wondering why they should delay them. One such acquaintance obtained a license to drive heavy-duty vehicles and now works as a truck driver.

Fourth category is families with men who have returned wounded or burned out. This is a widespread issue. Work is needed with these families, preparing people for reunions.

These categories are essential to ensure that flexibility in choosing target audiences is applied not only during planning but also throughout implementation.

Impact on women's participation in decision making

In response to the question of how Russia's war against Ukraine has affected women's participation in decision making, responses vary in terms of both positive and negative changes. An NGO worker noted that "it is also crucial to track women's participation in decision-making processes, depending on the level of regional impact".

In some ways the war has enhanced perceptions of women's leadership. For example, Security and Defence Sector (SDS) employees mentioned that "people have come to know themselves better. People realized their inner resources, and this is especially true for women". It also visibly changed men's attitudes toward women over the past year—

“women have shown incredible strength as soldiers, mothers, family members, and professionals”.

This is also noted by the NGO worker:

Women serving in the military have become role models for other girls and women. Overall, things that were previously done without support and seemed unnecessary have now become essential. Many women have been motivated to make previously invisible issues and problems visible.

At the same time the gendered challenges remain to women having influence. As the SDS employee mentioned:

The issue of women in leadership roles remains a challenge. While horizontal integration into areas previously unfamiliar to women has improved, the vertical progression in leadership positions is still more difficult.

Multiple burdens also remain important factors influencing women’s participation in decision-making processes.

An international organisation worker mentioned:

Since early 2022, Romani women have taken on many responsibilities. With many men limited in their activities or movement, or having left Ukraine, the Romani movement has largely fallen on the shoulders of women and Romani women’s organizations.

Unsuccessful decisions or negative trends have grown more prominent.

More than 7% of deputies have resigned from their mandates. Among these 7%, the majority are women who were elected by their fellow villagers or city residents. These women, who were elected and not subject to military duty, were put in a difficult position by the government decree No. 69 of 27.01.2023,¹⁵ which gave them a choice—to work for the community or to be with their child.¹⁶

Work aimed at supporting and growing political leadership is important right now. An international organisation worker mentioned that “there is a need for a political leadership school for Roma women. The knowledge and skills gained will not only be applied in politics but also in professional fields.” This is needed for all women, and some NGOs have already started to organize it.

In addition to looking at where women are engaged in leadership roles, it is also necessary to look at what impact this is having on them and how they can be supported. Burnout and exhaustion are common features. NGO workers suggested:

Retreats are essential. Training should not only focus on specific skills but also on developing soft skills—such as time management, and so on. If you plan well, you

¹⁵ ‘Cabinet Of Ministers Of Ukraine Resolution,’ (trans) <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/69-2023-%D0%BF#Text> 27 January 2023, on amendments to the Rules for Crossing the State Border by Ukrainian Citizens. This resolution gives local council deputies the right to cross the state border for official trips. However, this ban has made it impossible for women local council deputies to travel abroad for volunteering or to evacuate families to safe countries, etc. Women are not subject to mandatory mobilisation, so such a ban on them is unreasonable.

¹⁶ Oksana Prodan, ‘About Women, War, and the Economy: Feminine War,’ (trans) LB.ua, 8 January 2024, https://lb.ua/blog/oksana_prodan/592710_pro_zhinok_viyynu_ekonomiku.html

will find time for both work and rest. There is significant burnout. Short-term scholarships for education, ranging from three months to six months, could be helpful. These could assist in broadening perspectives and help people begin to think 'outside the bubble'. For planning, it is important to have an understanding of the bigger picture—transitioning from a sense of inferiority to expertise. A minimum of 3 to 6 months. This could be about European law, the European Court of Human Rights, and so on.

How has the war affected women's lives in specific spheres?

Security and Defence

Women in the Armed Forces

Ukraine has fully utilised the 'window of opportunity' opened up by Russia's armed aggression to advance gender policy in the security and defence sector. Changes in regulatory acts governing women's access and service conditions, provision of uniforms, the introduction of gender advisor positions, and other shifts have laid a broad foundation for ongoing gender transformations.

However, given the scope of work in this field, the most noticeable trend in analytical documents and interviews is a delay in addressing practical issues and a slowdown in developing gender policies at the operational and tactical levels. A report on 'Women in War: Overcoming the Glass Ceiling' produced by Radio Svoboda (Radio Liberty) in 8 March 2024, noted a number of key points:

Government officials emphasize that all restrictions on the appointment and service of female soldiers in all positions (including combat roles) across all military specialties in the Ukrainian Armed Forces have been lifted. This is ensured by a law passed in 2018.

Is this truly effective, and what is the trend regarding gender equality in the Ukrainian military? Are women's voices heard in the information space concerning war-related issues?

At least 4,000 Ukrainian women hold combat positions in the Armed Forces. However, their numbers could be higher. There are frequent cases where women must fight for the opportunity to serve on equal footing with their male counterparts.

For many, this is not achieved on the first attempt, and in some units, women cannot be mobilized at all.¹⁷

However while there has been an increase in the number of women serving in the armed forces, there remain some practical challenges for women in those roles. In response to the question 'What is wrong with the Ukrainian army?' posed by Hromadske TV on 25 September 2024, women soldiers¹⁸ highlighted several key challenges women may face, due to invisibility, misogyny, and gender stereotypes. These include a lack of recognition

¹⁷ Olena Vysokolyan, 'Women at War: How to Overcome the Glass Ceiling,' (trans) Radio Liberty, 8 March 2024, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zhinky-na-viyni-henderna-rivnist/32853881.html>

¹⁸ Oleksandra Sakharuk, 'Is there no gender in the military?' (trans) Hromadske, 25 September 2024, <https://hromadske.ua/suspilstvo/231813-u-viysku-nemaye-stati>

of women's combat roles and the need for appropriate equipment; lack of medical support and provision for personal hygiene; and gender stereotypes that enabled harassment of women in those roles.

These issues, along with solutions and best practices, can be identified by topic as follows.

Gender Sensitivity in Military Training

The introduction of a systematic gender approach to the training of military personnel in Ukraine can be traced back to 2017, when a gender impact assessment was conducted for Ukraine's SDS.¹⁹ In 2018 and 2020, self-assessments of higher education institutions were carried out and summarised to evaluate the feasibility and potential of incorporating a gender component into educational institutions within Ukraine's SDS. A third self-assessment is currently being conducted in 2024. In 2021, 'Guidelines on Integrating Gender Approaches in Training Specialists for the Security and Defence Sector of Ukraine'²⁰ were developed and published. These recommendations were endorsed by the academic councils of all 28 higher education institutions for implementation in the educational process. Work on updating these guidelines began in 2024. All of this has provided a strong impetus for real, unified steps in this area.

The interviewees' recommendations detail the steps that need to be continued at the operational and tactical levels.

An SDS employee mentioned:

Integrating gender topics into the practical components of training, with mandatory study of gender analysis in relevant application areas.

Identifying and studying lessons on gender issues, best practices (lessons identified, lessons learned, best practices): institutionalization, integration (a retrospective analysis of failures and achievements).

The 'Gender Analysis of the Strategy for Shaping and Developing Human Capital in Ukraine's Armed Forces' highlights several key recommendations,²¹ including:

National-patriotic education and military professional orientation promoting military service and motivating both girls and boys, men and women, to equally fulfil their constitutional duty to defend Ukraine.

However, while good progress has been made on increasing the awareness of gender within the SDS, there are a number of gendered barriers that remain, with an identified

¹⁹ UN Women, 'Assessment of Gender Impact on the Security and Defence Sector of Ukraine in 2017,' (trans)

https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ECA/Attachments/Publications/2018/Gender%20Impact%20Assessment%20Ukraine%202017_UA_fin.pdf

²⁰ UN Women, 'Methodological recommendations on integrating gender approaches into the system of training specialists for the security and defence sector of Ukraine,' (trans)

<https://www.kmu.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/1/18%20-%20Department/18%20-%20PDF/08.2021/hei-web-final.pdf>

²¹ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Gender Analysis of the Strategy for the Formation and Development of Human Capital in the Defense Forces of Ukraine,' 13 September 2024, <https://wicc.net.ua/post/gendernyy-analiz-strategiyi-formuvannya-ta-rozvytku-lyuds-kogo-kapitalu-v-sylah-oborony-ukrayiny>

need to continue efforts to inform, train, and engage SDS senior leadership on gender issues.

Stereotypes

Stereotypical perceptions of women and men in the SDS contribute to violations of their constitutional and human rights. This phenomenon is widespread worldwide, so the identification of new forms of stereotyping and effective innovative tools to share them must be an ongoing process.

An SDS employees mentioned:

There is a need to eliminate stereotypes regarding women in leadership positions and to combat ageism. At the same age, men are considered fit for service and work, while women are 'old'.

To this day, we still cannot grant women real access to operational and mine-clearance activities. This has always been a closed topic. A strong stereotype persists: 'We need to protect women.' We say, we are professionals; we don't need protection.

Another stereotype is: you are a woman, so why are you involved in a man's job? You must have been forced to leave your home. To be able to respond, one must learn.

Women's Leadership and Mentorship

The need for 'soft' knowledge and skills to support women in the SDS has been long-standing, but it has gained greater significance now, according to those who responded to interview questions. Leadership skills and mentorship were mentioned by everyone involved in the SDS or those collaborating with it, such as civil society organisations.

In addition to the usual topics of human rights, gender equality, and conflict transformation, participants emphasised the importance of learning and strengthening English language skills, supporting emotional resilience, public speaking (oratory skills), and training in physical endurance and self-defence.

Communication

Although the number of women soldiers continues to rise, analysts from the Institute of Mass Information note a decrease in the presence of women in the information space regarding the war. Currently, only 17 per cent of expert comments in the media are provided by women.²² This issue is also acknowledged by women soldiers and civil society activists working with the SDS on gender-related topics.

An SDS employee noted, "There is a need to teach how to create gender-sensitive visual content", while an NGO worker mentioned, "The creation of high-quality informational products about women in the military is necessary".

²² Olena Vysokolyan, 'Women at War: How to Overcome the Glass Ceiling,' (trans) Radio Liberty, 8 March 2024 <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zhinky-na-viyjni-henderna-rivnist/32853881.html>

Rehabilitation and Burnout Prevention

As mentioned earlier, exhaustion, burnout, and their consequences are exacerbated by the prolonged nature of the war against Ukraine.

An SDS employee mentioned:

Approaches to psychological rehabilitation must be revised, taking into account the differences between women and men, as they have different reactions to stress, trauma, and PTSD. The recovery process is also different for each gender.

Off-site retreats are also very necessary. Experience exchange with other countries—educational institutions, physical training requirements, and the balancing of family and professional life—are all important areas to explore.

Transition from Military to Civilian Career

The transition from a military to a civilian career for women is significantly different from that of men. After 20 years of military service, which grants the right to retire, men have more opportunities for civilian employment, as they are considered more attractive in the job market due to their relevant experience. Women, however, are not perceived in the same way by the market, nor do they perceive themselves that way. Women who joined the military immediately after high school, entering military universities, have never had civilian professions and are unfamiliar with the specifics of work in the non-military sector. In addition to the lack of civilian professional opportunities, they face their own insecurities and internal barriers regarding the age at which they need to make such a sharp transition.

An SDS employee mentioned:

For those who return to civilian life, it is important to have opportunities to see where they can get involved. There are women—career servicepersons—who have never worked outside the military. After 20 years of service, they retire. What will they do if there is no assistance with career counselling or employment support?

Women Veterans

Women veterans face nearly all the same challenges as women in the SDS. However, the transition out of active military service and the prolonged nature of the war have a negative synergistic effect.

An SDS employee mentioned:

At the beginning of the invasion, there were many injuries, and now there are ongoing somatic ailments. The psychological strain is also widespread—insomnia, general fatigue—everything affects mental health.

There are also other specific needs that should be addressed. These include access to sports and cultural activities.

An SDS employee mentioned:

Football for female amputees was a great initiative. In general, sports for veterans, especially female veterans, help release muscle tension. Schools have gym facilities,

for example. If a physical education teacher were assigned to work with IDPs or veterans, with additional compensation, it would be a huge help for us as a whole.

Cultural activities are also critically needed. Veterans have limited financial resources, so they are unlikely to spend their own money on such activities, yet there is a strong need for them.

This last insight reinforces how for women, the gendered experience of security and defence does not always exist within the forces, but rather in the impact that gendered roles have on everyday life during and after mobilisation.

Housing

Housing issues, particularly for military families who are also IDPs, have become even more pressing.

An SDS employee said:

From the beginning of the war, military families have faced significant family challenges, which have only worsened with the invasion. Wives have relocated to western Ukraine or abroad, resulting in separation, divorces, and the formation of new families. Is there a solution to this? Yes—construction of ‘quick’ housing. These families are often unemployed, with children out of school, and under pressure from rental costs. The goal is to build ‘quick’ modular houses in four regions. These structures can be assembled within a month but are designed to last up to 50 years. Up to 10 houses would be built per location, ensuring they don’t form a stigmatized ‘military town’ and would only require 1 hectare of land. This approach supports the integration of military personnel into new communities.

Stabilisation and Recovery

Stabilisation and recovery will be more effective and efficient if women are involved in these processes and gender-specific aspects are taken into account. Stabilisation processes must consider the oversights and mistakes made, particularly during the stabilisation actions carried out after the liberation of occupied territories in Ukraine. One of the key components of stabilisation actions includes identifying, assisting, and surveying potential survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). Methodological recommendations for handling CRSV survivors during stabilisation activities and investigative actions²³ have been widely disseminated, but this action protocol now needs to be updated and communicated to those who will be participating in these processes.

Recovery, being a longer-term process, must fully encompass all levels and components of recovery. Over the past two years, much has been done to implement gender approaches at the strategic level, but now the operational and tactical levels require further detailing and careful development.

²³ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Methodological recommendations for the treatment of victims of SNPK,' (trans) 7 April 2023, <https://wicc.net.ua/post/metodychni-rekomendatciyi-schodo-povodzhennya-iz-postrazhdalymy-vid-snpk>

The gender analysis of the Ukraine Facility Plan (2024–2027) identifies gaps in a comprehensive gender approach and provides recommendations for addressing them.²⁴

The Plan, approved on March 18, 2024, significantly expanded the gender vision of recovery and outlined practical steps for its implementation.

An important step forward in integrating the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men into recovery plans is the involvement of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, Kateryna Levchenko, in the Interdepartmental Working Group on preparing an action plan as part of implementing the European Commission's proposal on the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to establish the Ukraine Facility. This has accelerated the preparation of recommendations within the gender expert community and made it possible to convey these recommendations directly to the relevant parties.

Sections such as education, public administration, human capital, labor market, small and medium enterprises, regional policy, demining, and digital transformation include a gender component in describing the situation, planning reforms, and forecasting impacts.

It is necessary to analyze and, if required, apply a gender approach at all levels of planning—strategic, operational, and tactical.

The absence of a cross-cutting gender approach is also noted in certain products prepared by Ukrainian specialists with the support of international donors, even though, overall, all donors declare support for gender equality in their projects and initiatives.

The DREAM platform (p. 35 of the Ukraine Facility Plan) positions itself as a digital ecosystem for accountable recovery management. This unique system is developed and implemented by Ukrainian experts. Tens of thousands of projects, occurring simultaneously at various stages across the country, will be supported by a unified digital pathway through DREAM.

Currently, DREAM lacks a gender component, which significantly complicates its integration across all projects and calls into question the overall implementation of the principle of gender equality in recovery efforts.²⁵

Certain steps have been taken to apply gender approaches to the repair and construction of specific facilities and the formation of local recovery plans. These steps require discussion, experience-sharing, and widespread dissemination.

Checklists for use in local recovery plans highlight gaps at all stages of planning,²⁶ including a lack of participation by women's civil society organisations in planning, the absence of regulatory documents among basic planning references, and the lack of a gender component in problem formulation, goals, objectives, actions, performance indicators, resource analysis, and funding sources.

²⁴ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Plan for Ukraine Facility (2024 – 2027). Gender analysis,' (trans) 5 September 2024, <https://wicc.net.ua/post/plan-dlya-ukraine-facility-2024-2027-gendernyy-analiz>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Checklist for analyzing recovery plans,' (trans) 7 March 2024 <https://wicc.net.ua/post/kontrol-nyy-spysok-dlya-analizu-planiv-vidnovlennya>

Economic Sustainability

What role will women play in Ukraine's recovery?²⁷

According to calculations by the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, as of May 2023, Ukraine's permanent population was 29 million. Of this number, just over 9 million are employed, and, excluding public sector workers, approximately 6–7 million remain. This core workforce 'supports' 22–23 million citizens, including retirees, children, students, the unemployed, and public sector workers.

The Ministry of Economy forecasts that for rapid economic recovery, Ukraine needs to attract an additional 4.5 million workers to the labor market over the next 10 years. This will be very challenging, and without fundamental changes in the labor market and an enhanced role for women, this goal will be unachievable

The Ministry of Economy also confirms this need, with a government official noting that “Regarding retraining and entrepreneurship training – the volume we need here is so high that it will always feel insufficient”.

Several economic analyses conducted over the past year on women's participation in economic processes identify trends that influence these dynamics. The economic situation for women has deteriorated since the start of the full-scale invasion and war, yet there are significant opportunities for supporting women's economic empowerment even amidst ongoing conflict, as highlighted by a study ‘Women's Economic Empowerment in Ukraine during Russia's Invasion’ published in October 2024.²⁸

1. Less than half of women in Ukraine are employed, and the percentage of officially employed men exceeds that of women.
2. The war has intensified sectoral employment differentiation between men and women. A significant contributor to inequality in Ukraine's labour market between women and men is the wide differences in where they work. They are engaged in different sectors of the economy, and if they do work in the same sector, they usually work in different professional groups. They have different qualifications and are treated differently based on them.
3. The burden of unpaid caregiving work negatively impacts women's ability to enter or re-enter the paid labour market. Women in Ukraine have always borne the burden of unpaid care, and this has now only worsened due to school closures, high demand for volunteer work, and the absence of men—mobilised, wounded, killed.
4. Women are willing to retrain for new jobs and need support to facilitate this transition.
5. Women are founding new businesses at a higher rate than men, and if this trend continues, the share of women in entrepreneurship may equal that of men.

²⁷ Nina Levchuk, 'What will be the role of women in the reconstruction of Ukraine?' (trans) Ukrainska Pravda, 30 October 2023, <https://www.epravda.com.ua/columns/2023/10/30/706030/>

²⁸ UN Women, 'Economical Empowerment of Women In Ukraine in the Rural State,' (trans) https://ukraine.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/un_women_briefing_on_ween_in_ukraine_ukr.pdf

6. The Ukrainian government and civil society organisations are actively supporting women's economic empowerment, but local-level capacity remains critically insufficient.

The October 2023 'Analysis on Economic Security Risks for Women' highlights the following issues:²⁹

- Economic security is influenced by factors long embedded in the Ukrainian economy as well as new factors arising from Russian aggression, especially the full-scale invasion.
- Emotional vulnerability acts as an additional negative factor exacerbating economic vulnerability.
- The presence of gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment in the workplace, and other forms of gender inequality, along with a lack of knowledge and skills to protect one's rights, have a systemic nature and significantly impact women's economic security.
- Lack of caregiving infrastructure disproportionately burdens women due to traditional gender roles that assign caregiving responsibilities to them.
- A lack of life-planning skills, including budgeting, negatively impacts economic security.
- Community involvement presents a significant resource for both employing women and meeting society's growing need for social support. These needs are expected to intensify due to the impact of Russian aggression on life in Ukraine.
- Gender stereotypes limit women's access to certain professions traditionally seen as male-dominated, a perception held by both employers and women themselves.

Both studies highlight challenges and opportunities in women's economic empowerment.

The role of the Ministry of Economy is central in this area, with its initiatives, supported projects, and programmes playing a crucial role. The issues raised resonate with the studies' findings, but with added details.

A government official also mentioned that:

Women's economic sustainability is an unquestioned priority for the Ministry of Economy. A complex issue emerges: the Ministry enables access to the labor market, but progress is often hindered by stereotypes and a weak institutional support system. Women typically request smaller amounts for microgrants, reflecting fears like 'I'm not worth it' or 'I can't do this'. To address this, an informational campaign, 'Of course, you can', has been launched with high hopes.

There is also an important focus on social entrepreneurship, which, while in its early stages, shows promise. For example, a woman over 60 recently started a business called 'Grandmothers Knit Socks', which is doing very well. The 50+ age group

²⁹ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Analysis of Economic Security Risks For Women, Based on Results of Focus Group Interviews, Kyiv, 2023,' (trans) https://wicc.net.ua/media/Analysis_of_ESRW.pdf

overall represents a vital source of human capital, though a clear understanding is needed on how to reskill these individuals and what skills are required.

Currently, the employment service has only 8 centers for vocational education (out of the original 11, with 2 in occupied territories and 1 destroyed). When we began assessing them, we saw a need for capital repairs and new premises to modernize these centers. Long-term, sustainable partnerships of at least five years are of interest, such as our current collaboration with Germany.

The three priority areas are:

- Enterprise development with an emphasis on social enterprises,
- Support for women's reskilling, and
- Support for employer engagement.

Veteran women and civic organisations add that, in addition to professional and business training, there is a great need for support in emotional stability and building self-confidence.

An SDS employee mentioned, "Many grants are offered to veterans, but people are not yet ready." An NGO worker notes that "people are not ready for retraining; there is a lack of confidence. Moreover, there is no urgent need for retraining now—there are many vacancies where untrained people are accepted."

Humanitarian Aid

In 2022 a study conducted by disability rights organisation Fight for Right highlighted the following challenges:

... large international humanitarian organizations work globally, and Ukraine is just one of the countries to which they provide humanitarian assistance. However, it is important to consider that these organizations have built their operations over many years and should be ready to respond promptly, timely, and effectively to the challenges any war poses to civilians, including people with disabilities. These organizations have access to huge flows of donations, large numbers of staff, global networks, etc. Therefore, it is very important that their work is constantly evaluated, especially by those who are receiving the assistance.

Currently, we still have doubts regarding how well international humanitarian aid meets the needs of people with disabilities. We have one general recommendation for all international humanitarian actors—when planning their actions, consider both the intersectionality and diversity of the societies where they work, and also the voices of the beneficiaries they are trying to assist. Because work that does not take into account the situation assessment and real needs of the beneficiaries often leads to the inability to meet the truly urgent needs of people in humanitarian crisis situations.³⁰

³⁰ Iryna Fedorovych, 'An overview of the work of international humanitarian organizations and their response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine caused by military aggression by the Russian Federation,' (trans), Fight for Right, 2022 <https://frr.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ohliad-mizhnarodnykh-humanitarnykh-orhanisatsiy-1.pdf>

In the two years since the publication of the report, interviews confirm that the situation has not changed.

The August 2024 report, 'The Noble but Bureaucratized Task: How and Why Humanitarian Aid in Ukraine Found Itself in a Gray Zone',³¹ shows the results of an investigation into this area. The report mentions problems with logistics, lack of coordination, lack of transparency in the distribution of humanitarian aid, criminal violations (theft, fraud, etc.), difficulties in using the electronic format of registration of humanitarian aid providers, among others.

The issues of coordination of international humanitarian aid programmes in Ukraine are detailed in the work of Olena Shevchenko, a women's and LGBTQ+ peoples rights activist.³²

Coordination should be inclusive, and the organizations responsible for coordination need sufficient potential, including staff, funding, communication infrastructure, and other resources.

Effective surveying is important, but clear, concise questions are needed, and in general, the survey should be targeted. It is difficult to assess needs because people are in different locations, in different situations, with different priorities, and changes are happening quickly.

The humanitarian sector and international organizations in this field work disconnected from the context. Humanitarian aid is not based on an assessment of the needs of the affected population, where women predominate. There has been no proper assessment, and there is none. Humanitarian aid is disconnected from real needs. Humanitarian organizations view local organizations as implementing partners, meaning executors of what they have decided to do. They independently plan and dictate what needs to be done.

As a result:

- *A gap between what is actually needed and what is provided*
- *Further planning and data collection yield irrelevant and useless data.*
- *Proposals are not sensitive to our context.*
- *Regional breakdown is unclear – if a person lived in one area and moved, how should they be considered?*

Further planning will be even worse because it will be based on all the incorrect previous data.

The interviewees from NGOs provided specific examples illustrating the situation.

They found us. Afterward, we said we would not work with them. How is that? In winter, they brought cooling blankets. And there was no one to tell them to solve it. Then they told us that we had high salaries. People need to be paid properly. This is discrimination and humiliation when the level of payment differs by tens of times.

³¹Oleksandr Humeniuk, 'A Noble but Bureaucratic Cause: How and Why Humanitarian Aid in Ukraine Found itself in a Gray Zone,' (trans) Zaborona, 28 August 2024 <https://zaborona.com/blagorodna-ale-zabyurokratyzovana-sprava-yak-i-chomu-gumanitarna-dopomoga-v-ukrayini-opynylyasya-v-sirij-zoni-rozsliduvannya-zaborony/>

³² Shevchenko, O., 'Problems of Coordination of International Humanitarian Programs in Ukraine,' *Humanitas*, 2024, 3, 178–186, <https://doi.org/10.32782/humanitas/2024.3.25>

The whole year – politics, meetings – the communication was very long – then they demanded a bill in Swiss francs. They offered us a bank. At first, a standard list, but then the question – who did you pay, give the names, addresses, and phone numbers of these people. These are all personal data. How are we supposed to give them, especially since this is not required by either Ukrainian legislation or similar structures? We refused, especially after learning that this was the only bank that refused to close accounts in Russia. I demanded to return the documents – they said no. Then I said I would call the police, and they would have to explain. They returned the documents. I only work with national banks. Be careful with personal data.

A lot has been done formally. For example, they provide premises, but it is not convenient for women, veterans, and other groups. You can't bring a baby stroller, you can't go in a wheelchair – just to have it. There is no coordination or real assessment of needs.

In the humanitarian field, it is important to consult local experts at the planning stage – according to internal protocols, not protocols brought from countries with different climates and conditions. For instance, when protocols from African countries or Syria are blindly brought in and water is delivered by trucks when something completely different is needed.

An important issue for donors, local organisations, and society as a whole is the transition from humanitarian aid to development projects. Civil society organisations' proposals highlight the need for a comprehensive approach, combining components from the start of aid delivery. Another factor is flexibility and a timely response, which can be fully ensured by local organisations that understand the context and see the trends.

NGO workers also mentioned:

How to transit from humanitarian aid to development projects? I worked individually. From the very beginning, there were meetings with the employment center. Many people went to study psychology. Even if they don't work, they can help themselves and their families. There were campaigns – 'open doors' – groups were formed, showing various enterprises and organizations. Individual work is also important.

The aid is given drop by drop, and there is nothing on which to build your independence. They say everything is directed towards capability, but in reality, it's not.

What is needed for the transition from humanitarian aid to development? A woman usually raises children or takes care of the sick, the elderly, etc. She needs a flexible schedule. She doesn't need hairdressing and manicure courses. She needs something that will bring real money. The focus of the proposed professions needs to be changed.

There is a lack of a planning cluster in the humanitarian field, to which we need to be involved. Some know the context, and this is important in planning, not loading us with imaginary mythical programs, like a training on how to distribute sanitary kits.

Some civil society organisations note that their advocacy efforts have led to some changes over the past year. NGO workers particularly mentioned:

We now purchase more ourselves. We are in contact with the target audience. We have developed forms for different audiences online, volunteers call and ask if we've

missed anything. We add items ourselves – flashlights, warmers, shoes, insoles, sleeping bags, dishes, bedding – depending on the season. There is a field in the surveys where you can add your needs that haven't been considered. We analyze this. Now we provide shopping carts' where there are transportation problems. Women with children, elderly people cannot carry humanitarian packages by hand.

The trend of eliminating UN intermediaries to minimize administrative costs is gradually gaining strength – 4 Ukrainian organizations are already piloting this.

Organisation of Donor Support

To effectively promote gender approaches, it is important to consider not only the specific areas where changes are needed but also how donor aid should be organised. Representatives of civil society organisations identified three main groups of issues:

- Bureaucratisation of application submission and reporting,
- Lack of flexibility in priorities, and
- Absence of consultations with local civil society organisations.

NGO workers also mentioned that:

Submitting an application is like going through nine circles of hell. Most donors require a budget, application, resume, and contracts. But sometimes, they additionally require documents that need to be filled out. These are specific certificates that take 2-3 weeks to obtain, an audit (which is very expensive), and other documents. And all documents are in English.

There were also cases where a competition was announced, but they did not say when the results would be available. We wait, but we don't know. Everything is unclear.

Civil society organizations write about pressing issues, but this does not match the expectations of the donors. How is that? They work to help us. How can it not match the real problems?

Now, there is no need to divide regions; many people have relocated. There should be no geographical priorities.

They give money for economic support of military families, but only to women, while in a family, there may be not only women. Such a restriction is inappropriate.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the findings presented in this report it is clear that significant support will be required to rebuild after the war. This support will need to be sensitive to both gender and context if it is to be effective. As a starting point, the preservation of knowledge and institutional memory requires significant support.

An NGO worker mentioned:

A Center for Professional Development focusing on the agenda of Women, Peace and Security needs to be established. We will have enough work in this area for a long time, and other countries will have much to learn from us

Among the conclusions, there is a warning that the distribution of donor attention lacks a balanced approach, and recommendations emphasise a cross-cutting approach to solving the issues related to girls and young women.

Gendered consequences of the war, especially for adolescents and young women in all their diversity, remain largely unaddressed, as much of the international community focuses on military aid. Despite the initial extensive media coverage of the war in Ukraine and the international response, the war and its consequences risk becoming another forgotten humanitarian crisis, as attention to the long-term humanitarian impacts on internally displaced persons and refugees decreases.

To mitigate the severe consequences of the war, including for adolescent girls, both long-term and localized solutions are needed. This includes donors working with national and local authorities to strengthen child protection, education, and health systems, including through initiatives supporting social services, social workers, and teachers.³³

Women's Participation

Recommendations on how to respond are generally universal and applicable across all target groups and related projects.

Aim to:³⁴

- Support initiatives aimed at overcoming the stigma surrounding survivors.
- Support the development of expertise and capacity.
- Support international networks.

³³ Plan International, 'Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices from Ukraine, Poland and Romania,' (trans) June 2024 https://plan-international.org/uploads/2024/08/AGiC-Ukraine_Research-Report-Ukrainian-FINAL.pdf

³⁴ 'The Warrior's Beloved Path,' (trans) Veteran Hub <https://veteranhub.com.ua/analytics/shlyah-kohanoyi-voyina/>

- Support partnership projects aimed at economic empowerment for women.

How to do it:³⁵

- Apply a strategic approach to projects.
- Implement clear and transparent feedback mechanisms.
- Aim for partnerships built on trust.
- Prevent burnout.
- Develop a referral system.

Supporting rehabilitation and preventing burnout are essential component of projects (retreats, cultural and sporting activities, etc.).

Stabilisation and Recovery

Recommendations for communities on developing and implementing recovery plans that consider equal rights and opportunities for men and women outline aspects requiring attention from the gender expert community, such as:³⁶

- Strengthening expert capacity and supporting research, particularly in gender tools for stabilisation and recovery processes.
- Assessing project decisions' impact on gender equality.
- Ensuring gender-sensitive elements in buildings and facilities.
- Gender-sensitive elements in spatial planning (infrastructure)
- Having criteria for evaluating safety audits, comfort, equal access to opportunities, and equity of outcomes for different population groups based on gender roles, without stereotypes or biases.

In general, the aspects necessary to fully integrate gender-specific components into recovery can be grouped into three categories:

- Participation of women's organisations and gender experts in the development of recovery plans.
- Operational and tactical levels of developing and implementing recovery plans.
- Cross-cutting gender approach in the tools, levels, and spheres of recovery.

Economic Recovery

The recommendations on economic resilience can be consolidated into one list:³⁷

³⁵ [Ibid.](#)

³⁶ Women's Information and Advisory Center, 'Recommendations for communities on the development and implementation of recovery plans that take into account the equal rights and opportunities of women and men,' (trans) https://wicc.net.ua/media/Recomendation_recovery.pdf

³⁷ UN Women, 'Economical Empowerment of Women In Ukraine in the Rural State,' (trans) <https://ukraine.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024->

To the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, public authorities, civic organisations, and international organisations

- Accessible information channels about available employment, retraining, and business creation programmes.
- Availability of access to preschools that meet safety requirements.
- Compliance with labour rights for persons with disabilities.
- Inclusion of a gender perspective in economic programmes beyond specialised women's programmes.

To public authorities, civil society organisations, and international organisations

Inclusion in employment / requalification / entrepreneurship programmes:

- Sections on enhancing emotional resilience (identification / self-identification of burnout and emotional trauma, assistance / self-help, plan to overcome emotional vulnerability, etc.).
- Sections on protecting one's rights (definition, counteraction, finding partnerships for advocacy, etc.).
- Sections on developing life planning skills, including budget planning.

Development of programmes:

- Training and requalification for STEM professions and other professions where there are still biases regarding women's employment in them.
- Preparation for relocation / business relocation to rural areas and identifying localities where such programmes can be implemented.
- Training and support for women's entrepreneurship (support for startups, mentorship programmes, informational and consultative support).
- Development of more programmes to encourage companies to employ women with equal pay.
- Establishment and development of social-focused civil organisations.
- Digital literacy for various levels of awareness and experience.
- Financial literacy for various levels of awareness and experience.
- Development of 'business in hands', that is, entrepreneurial activities that do not depend on relocation, the availability of production facilities, etc.
- Public communication campaigns and school gender-transformative educational programmes to promote the change of social norms towards

gender-equal opportunities in employment and gender-equal roles in caregiving.

- Encouraging international donors, especially members of the Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery Alliance, to apply the gender marker of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee and report on its use.
- Setting goals to increase women's leadership at all levels of government, both in elected and appointed positions, as well as in company boards of directors.
- Dissemination of specific initiatives that have been tested, such as the Women's Employment Center³⁸

To the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine

Amending and supplementing the legislation:

- On the mandatory implementation by employers of measures to counteract gender discrimination, sexual harassment in the workplace, and other manifestations of gender inequality.
- On expanding the 'municipal nanny' service to a wider range of individuals (not only for childcare for children requiring special care).
- Expanding the provision of quality and safe services for young children, elderly people, and persons with disabilities by public and private institutions to reduce the caregiving burden that falls on women.
- Focusing on target audiences that do not belong to the donor mainstream and adopting a flexible approach to determining the target audiences for projects overall.
- Supporting women's leadership, developing 'soft' skills, mentorship involving leaders of structures and organisations (particularly in the security and defence sectors) in gender training, mentorship, and other support models.
- Supporting creative solutions for organising caregiving work.
- Supporting creative solutions that foster women's economic activity (social entrepreneurship, working with employers, etc.).
- Developing the communication component for promoting women's leadership, expanding their roles, successes, etc.

³⁸ Women's Employment Center – a service created to enhance the rights, opportunities, and economic empowerment of women. Specifically, these centers offer vocational courses that help women find new employment. The project was established to support women during the extraordinary crisis caused by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine (<https://www.socialinnovations.com.ua/projects/women-hr>). Employment centers exist, but Roma women often lack education, documentation, and have five or more children. Employment centers often tell them to go to their community organisations. Community organisations have started developing economic development programmes – their names are good, but they focus on beauty, massage, with only one woman completing a web design course. There is a need for training that leads to real jobs and not just minimum wage work.

Humanitarian Assistance

- Supporting projects that combine humanitarian and development components.
- Supporting direct feedback from beneficiaries, rather than through implementation partners.