



співпраця з
НІМЕЧЧИНОЮ
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Importance of Research and Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming in a Sustainable Economic Development Project

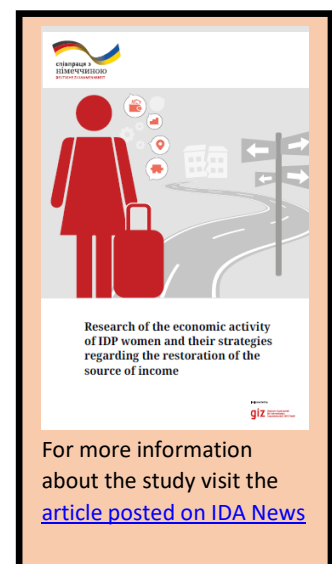
Promoting economic participation of vulnerable groups including IDPs in Ukraine (PN: 20.4046.7; GG1)

The full-scale invasion of Russian Federation in 2022 has a continuous destructive effect on lives of Ukrainian people. After the occupation of the southern regions of Ukraine including the territory of the sea of Azov region, for which the project was launched in 2020, the team worked hard to rearrange earlier planned activities. As a result of these efforts project supports economic activity and contributes to resilience of increasing number of IDPs in different parts of Ukraine. With thousands of men joining Ukrainian army, engagement of women in all the spheres – governance, business, civil society as well as family affairs grew dramatically. Along with that women were mostly affected by increasing unemployment and falling income. Revising the regions of operations and focusing on on-line instruments of service provision, the project preserved its three main intervention areas: assistance to local and regional authorities, support of MSMEs, improvement of entrepreneurial skills of vulnerable groups, including IDPs.

Research matters: Gender context of labour market and entrepreneurial activity in Ukraine during war time

As of January 23, 2023, an estimated 5.4 million people have been internally displaced within Ukraine due to the large-scale military operations on its territory¹. To understand deeper the challenges displaced women face searching for employment or starting/developing their businesses the project initiated a comprehensive national level study called *Research of the economic activity of IDP women and their strategies regarding the restoration of the source of income*. It included both quantitative and qualitative stages (survey 2050 respondents and 20 interviews with the stakeholders).

Overall, 24% of Ukrainian employees lost jobs because of the full-scale war and among IDP women this rate is twice higher – half of the pre-war employees lost their jobs. Only 31% of IDP women are employed vs. 59% among IDP men and local men and 45% of local women. As a result of a massive job loss, IDP women are the most financially vulnerable among target groups: 59% of them must save on basic needs such as food and/or



¹ IOM DTM (2023). Ukraine: Internal Displacement Report - General Population Survey, Round 12, 16-23 January 2023. Retrieved from <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-internal-displacement-report-general-population-survey-round-12-16-23-january-2023>

clothes (among local women this figure constitutes 51%, among IDP men – 40% and among local men 35%).

IDP women most often among all target audiences look for work with a flexible schedule (41%), remote work (29%), and part-time employment (28%). Only half of IDP women look for full-time jobs (vs. two third of IDP and local men).

The decisiveness to start business among IDP women is thrice lower than among IDP men: 5% of IDP women plan to start a business vs. 18% of IDP men. The top barriers for IDP women to starting a business are lack of start-up capital for development (73%) and lack of knowledge and experience (50% - specifically, on how to start a new business, accounting, and legislation).

At the moment of its publication the study was the first of its kind, analysing situation of specifically IDP women economic activity after February 2022. Its results were repeatedly requested by research institutes and think tanks as the valuable and reliable source of information. Supporting dissemination of gender focused research and data a GIZ project can make a valuable contribution to development of strategic decisions on regional and national level with understanding of women's needs including gender sensitive design of interventions.

Gender mainstreaming in project activities

Results of the study and recommendations have been considered during re-design and implementation of the different project components and its specific activities, so they respond more effectively to the needs of all beneficiaries – women and men. Already at the beginning of the project, several studies were conducted² to ensure effective and design of tailor made activities in each component, taking into account not only the gender perspective but also the needs of vulnerable groups like people with disabilities, veterans and young adults. Additionally, with support from an expert from the department Governance and Conflict of GIZ, an analysis was conducted on how to mainstream a Mental Health and Psycho Social Support (MHPSS) approach into main activities. The results of such a gender sensitive approach can be tracked in all the components of the project.

a) Gender mainstreaming in qualification and training activities dealing with improvement of entrepreneurial skills of vulnerable groups

Charity Fund “Right to protection”, supported with grant costs, combines legal support, job advisory and business consultations for young IDPs in Dnipro, city hosting more than 180 000 of internally displaced people. Following GIZ recommendations project team included topics of sexism prevention and equal participation of men and women in childcare to the programme of awareness on labour rights. The time for the training was chosen to suit the needs of mothers caring of their children. Spheres of particular interest for women (services, tourism) were chosen for business visits and on-sight meetings with the practitioners. The training program is on-going. It aims to boost self-confidence of the participants and to equip them with vital skills necessary for successful integration into the job market and starting their entrepreneurship activity in new place. Among 62 graduates of the program 52 are women. Such a proportion shows deep discrepancy of the effect economy decline has on the women population in Ukraine.

² Analysis were conducted in 2020/beginning of 2021, such as: Analytical report on research of challenges and potentials of support of Start-ups and Micro- and Small Businesses, Infosapiens 2020, Research on the Needs in Labour, Retraining and Retraining of vulnerable groups in the Sea of Azov region, Infosapiens 2020, Analytical report: Overview of the organizations working with vulnerable groups residing in the Azov Sea Coast Territories, Perepelitsia 2020;

The results of needs assessment conducted at the beginning of the project demonstrated high interest in training for IT specialties both among men and women. The recent research proved that remote working possibilities are in high demand among women, especially displaced ones. 20 (11 women) beneficiaries successfully complete training program on different IT specialities delivered by the leading NGO StrategEast in cooperation with IT practitioners. Graduates estimated the course as very informative and helpful due to the communication with mentors and HR specialists within sector. Part of them already reported positive change in their economic situation – they found a job, negotiated salary raise, obtained part time job or even increased the in-come from their entrepreneurial activity.

In 2020, Union of Ukrainian Entrepreneurs conducted research which indicated that only 16% SMEs in Ukraine are run by young people aged 18-35. To make a significant shift in promoting entrepreneurial thinking and business initiative the partnership with Junior Achievement Europe was established. This NGO launched a pilot course of business training program tailored for youth in 37 VET schools with enrolment of 276 students (136 girls). As a result of the program, part of girls reporting improvement in their skills and self-confidence was higher than percentage of boys in nearly all skills. Growth in the number of students willing to open their own business was also higher among girls. The biggest improvement was noted in the understanding of steps required to open a business – this number grew by 49,8% (for boys – by 47,1%, for girls – by 51,5%).

b) Gender mainstreaming in private sector support of Micro, Small and Medium businesses

Despite all the challenges connected with war Ukrainian MSMEs demonstrated high level of resilience and readiness to adapt their operations to new reality. As state of September 2023 over 2 mln of registered private entrepreneurs stay economically active. The number of newly registered entrepreneurs in Ukraine exceeds the number of closed ones by 8 thousand monthly (25 thousand vs 17 thousand). During first year of war 51% of new entrepreneurs were women. The relevant proportion can be observed when analysing the data of the initiatives supported by the project aimed at providing grants and business consultancy to MSMEs in Ukraine.

The grant support program for existing micro and small enterprises was designed in a specific way to give opportunities to vulnerable groups, including women. Grant was provided considering the quality of business plan, presentation and business responsibility component of the application. The jury aimed to achieve equal participation of men and women applicants: among 80 grants, which were provided to MSMEs in frame of the projects, 49 were provided to men and 31 – to women. Among relocated businesses, supported by grants, 31 belong to men while only 18 – to women. This difference can be the aftermath of increasing domestic workload worsened by the difficulties of displacement. In comparison the number of men and women businesses among locals, supported with grants, closely approaches the parity – 16 and 12 respectively.

Among enterprises that got business consultations the number of businesswomen was slightly bigger – 138 against 132 of men. Both men and women entrepreneurs almost equally estimate the consultancy services as useful and such which helped them to adapt their business to war conditions. When speaking about future of the MSMEs after 12 months of war men and women are quite optimistic about expanding their businesses within Ukraine and abroad.

c) Gender mainstreaming in economic development activities for local and regional authorities.

Before the outbreak of the war, the project was able to design and support specific activities with a gender focus such as a female entrepreneurship competition as part of the regional economic

strategy of Donetsk Oblast to encourage female entrepreneurship and identify role models. Another activity being the inclusion of women's perspective into local and regional planning in 2020/2021

The outbreak of war, the occupation of the Sea of Azov region – the initial target region of the project – resulted in revision of the component and switch to identification of most urgent needs and timely response on them. The radical shift was made from the development of strategic documents on business development for partner municipalities and communities to support of work of the local councils, administrations, educational institutions, NGOs from occupied communities after their evacuation and relocation. Preventing massive brain drain from the region and preserving activity of main stakeholders was crucial for recovery of the region when the security situation will allow it.

In 2020 over 75% of all state workers and more than 80% of teachers and lecturers in Ukraine were women. During war time everyday reality for predominantly women workers of state and educational sector includes lack of material resources and equipment, electricity shortages, continuous air raid/artillery shelling alerts and psychological burn-out. Under these conditions demand for educational, state services and support to people fleeing from war is staying permanently high. Lecturers and students at relocated universities had to start their year from scratch in new place. Relocated municipalities and communities work hard to provide all sorts of assistance to displaced people, but also to prepare plans for future renovation and development of their communities.

One of the first initiatives in new conditions was psycho-social support for the state workers and educators, provision of basic equipment to fulfil their duties and support of public-private cooperation and communities' development in war conditions. In total 65 women in state and educational sector took part in the activities on psychological first aid and burn-out prevention. The beneficiaries expanded the impact of the initiative through provision of training on the topics to their colleagues and students (more than 600 in total).

Specialists from rural communities of Zaporizhzhia region had less experience in project development and implementation. These skills have become more important to raise funds and implement projects from international donors as state funds are scarce due to war constraints. Thus, special networking and training program with emphasis on communication and fundraising was introduced to them. 27 women and 13 men from 6 relocated communities of Zaporizhzhia region successfully completed the program. At the moment East Europe Foundation is providing a series of trainings on project management and implementation of recovery projects to the representatives of selected communities (29 women and 10 men).

Being seriously affected with aftermaths of war and occupation women in Ukraine demonstrate high level of resilience and readiness to study and improve their expertise or master new spheres. Still, experiencing multiple workload as part of affected communities, often being heads of households women need adequate support with affordability of childcare and education for the children, retraining and flexible working schedule as part of social responsibility of the companies and part of state effort on encouraging their back to work decision. Gender mainstreaming and visibility of women should become part of Ukrainian renovation and development strategy on all the levels.

Contact Details:

Anastasiya Golikova

Project Coordinator for entrepreneurial and business skills and Gender Focal Point

anastasiya.golikova@giz.de

David Füchtjohann

Project Director

david.fuechtjohann@giz.de