



Disability-inclusive response and recovery

Lessons learned from engagement and
leadership of organisations of persons with
disabilities in the humanitarian response in
Ukraine | April 2025

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Easy to Read

An easy-to-read summary of this document will be available on the EDF website in May 2025.

Preface

This report is based on the activities and lessons learned from the “Ukraine war: OPD (Organisation of Persons with Disability)-led disability-inclusive response and recovery” programme. This programme was funded by CBM International between February 2022 and February 2025 and implemented by the European Disability Forum (EDF) in collaboration with OPD partners in Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia (see Appendix 1). Information contained in this report draws on the outcomes of three programme evaluations conducted between March 2023 and March 2025.

1. Introduction

On 24th February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion into Ukraine which led to a humanitarian crisis. In the first months of the full-scale invasion, it was estimated that 6.2 million citizens had become internally displaced persons, and 4.2 million Ukrainians left the territory of Ukraine, with approximately 23% of these being persons with disabilities¹.

The European Disability Forum (EDF) and its members in Ukraine and neighbouring countries² were quick to respond. They saw the need to support persons with disabilities, who were being disproportionately impacted by the war and rapidly mobilised resources to respond. This included securing funding of almost €6.6 million from CBM International to implement the “Ukraine War: OPD-Led Disability-Inclusive Response and Recovery” programme³.

The Programme was implemented by EDF in collaboration with partners in Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia between February 2022 and February 2025. EDF and the majority of these programme partners are organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs).

Since its initial onset, the war has evolved into a protracted conflict situation, with continuing escalation of civilian casualties, widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, and people continuing to be forced to flee their homes.

A three-stage mixed methods external evaluation was built into the programme design, which entailed a country visit, internal and external

¹ ‘Rights of persons with disabilities during the war in Ukraine: Summary of monitoring report’, February 2024, produced by: Kharkiv Institute of Social Research, League of the Strong, National Association of Persons with Disabilities, European Disability Forum.

² Neighbouring countries include Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

³ The total amount of funding received is comprised of €2,913,081.42 for phase 1 (from 1/4/22 to 30/6/23) plus €3,682,866 for phase 2 (from 1/7/23 to 31/12/24).

stakeholder interviews, document reviews, a survey, and focus group discussions. [Read the final evaluation report here.](#)

The evaluation focused on the following four areas:

- Strengthening the disability movement.
- Disability inclusion in the wider humanitarian context.
- Addressing immediate need of persons with disabilities.
- Project management.

This report summarises key findings from the evaluation, selected by the authors. It is important to note that the report is not exhaustive and there are many more achievements and lessons learned that can be found in each of the evaluation reports. The findings and lessons learned presented in this report are those that the authors considered most relevant to stakeholders operating in Ukraine and other similar crises.

2. Key Achievements and Lessons Learned

Many lessons were learned in this programme. This report highlights the most important ones - the lessons we think should be taken forward and used in future programmes.

2.1 OPDs: Vital and credible humanitarian response partners

The programme proved that OPDs can play an important role in ensuring rapid and timely responses to the individual needs of persons with disabilities in an emergency, humanitarian response context, when they are supported to do so.

The challenge:

The crisis in Ukraine led to a rapid escalation of diverse needs for persons with disabilities. As well as basic needs such as food and shelter, persons with disabilities faced lack of access to bomb shelters, evacuation trains and other transport, a lack of access to assistive devices and medicines, and interruptions to essential health and care services.

OPDs operating in areas affected by the conflict across Ukraine and neighbouring countries faced a rapid increase in demand for their services and support and risked becoming overwhelmed by the complexity and diversity of needs.

The achievements:

OPDs successfully organised a rapid response to this escalation of need from the outset. The programme **provided direct support to more than 53,000 people**, 70% of whom are people with disabilities⁴. The type of support ranged from meeting essential basic needs such as food, hygiene products and shelter, through to disability specific needs such as the provision of assistive devices, accessible transport, improving

⁴ This figure is conservative (e.g. family size is not always accounted for) and it does not include people helped through advocacy.

accessibility of shelters, and legal and financial assistance for Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons with disabilities.

The programme was also successful at keeping essential disability support services running for persons with disabilities. This included providing uninterrupted contact via online support, while people moved from place to place and country to country. This was particularly beneficial for those with intellectual disabilities, who are amongst those most marginalised and most reliant on routine for wellbeing. Disability support services are denoted as one of the critical preconditions for inclusion by the Global Disability Fund, and unique to disability⁵.

The programme recognised the importance of supporting psychotherapeutic services for persons with disabilities and for OPD staff members. Psychotherapeutic services supported by the programme helped some people with depression – they learned how to manage panic attacks, accept their emotions, connect with the present and live in the today. As well as individual benefits of this support, wider societal and economic benefits were seen as people receiving these services were able to re-engage with their communities more quickly.

Key Success Factors and Lessons Learned:

There were several factors that led to this programme success.

OPDs in Ukraine were already present, organised and reached out to their international partners, such as EDF, for support: The programme achieved success through EDF's ability to engage with OPDs directly and quickly, and mobilise partners across Ukraine, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia⁶. This meant they could act as an intermediary body and channel resources from CBM International directly to OPDs.

⁵ https://unprpd.org/new/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/UNPRPD-Preconditions-to-disability-inclusion_1-13e.pdf

⁶ During the second phase of the programme this support was scaled back to focus on OPDs in Ukraine, Poland and Moldova.

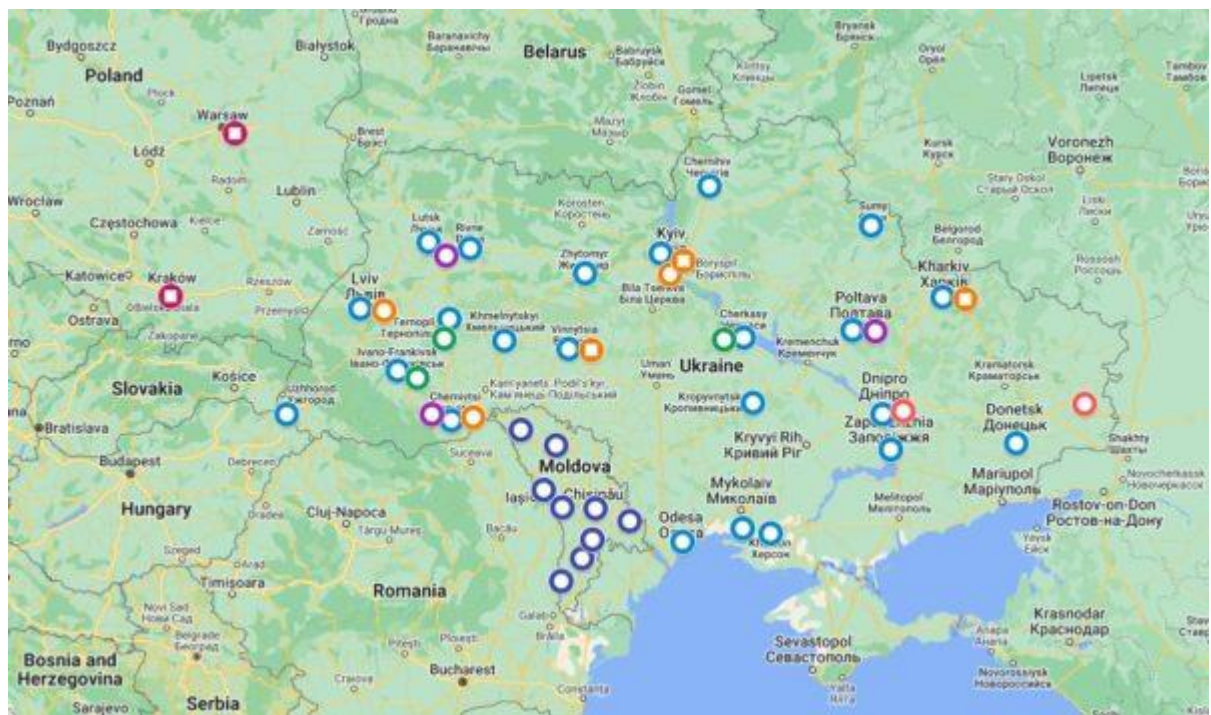
A networked and systems led approach, built by EDF, enabled joined up working between OPDs and relevant stakeholders within Ukraine and across neighbouring countries. This enabled OPDs to ensure uninterrupted service provision to persons with disabilities as they moved from place to place as a result of the conflict. This was supported by **pre-existing relationships** which EDF were able to leverage quickly during a time of crisis. Prior to the crisis, many of the lead OPDs outside Ukraine were already members of EDF. Although the Ukraine OPDs were not existing members, they were soon in touch with EDF. This enabled the OPDs to rapidly alert EDF to the challenges they were facing at the same time as enabling EDF to operationalise support to OPDs in affected countries without delay. As a result, EDF was able to quickly mobilise and disburse resources, including those received from CBM International.

An extensive network increased the reach of the programme: A key feature of this programme is the extensive network of OPDs, which meant the programme was able to conduct activities in almost every region of Ukraine (see figure 1). Further the diversity of OPDs meant that many functional domains of disability were represented. As well as general OPDs, supporting people with a range of disabilities, the programme also supported OPDs that specialised in intellectual disability, physical disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment and more.

Working in partnership with local OPDs enabled greater innovation and flexibility: Many of the OPD partners were rural and community based. Local OPDs were equipped with local knowledge about the persons with disability. This allowed adaptability and responsiveness to need that would not otherwise have happened without local knowledge. For example, some OPDs were able to leverage relationships with local post offices where they could arrange storage and delivery of essential equipment and assistive devices and gather knowledge of the whereabouts of harder to reach people.

Working through local OPD community centres was key to the flexibility and rapid response of the programme, as they were able to understand and respond to situational needs. For example, some community centres changed their purpose and operated as shelters for internally displaced people (IDPs) and provided central hubs for food distribution, as well as providing other essential services such as social reintegration for refugees, access to work skills and psychosocial support. Staff were flexible in their roles and adapted to changing needs such as doctors taking on roles of managing laundry. Localisation was key to the success of the programme. Community centres also allowed visibility of persons with disabilities within the local communities which was crucial to raising awareness of need.

Figure 1: Geographical reach of Phase 2 of the programme



This networked and collaborative ways of working between EDF, national umbrella and local OPDs, meant they were able to meet highly individualised and complex needs of persons with disabilities. It generated adaptable and innovative ways of working, meeting requirements of those most marginalised such as elderly people in rural areas or children and young people with complex disabilities needs.

2.2 Flexible funding for agile, relevant and individualised responses to diverse needs

Flexible funding enabled the programme to deliver activities in an agile, relevant and responsive way that met the many diverse needs of persons with disabilities affected by the Ukraine crisis.

The challenge:

Delivering an effective emergency response requires funding, essential to OPDs, many of whom did not have the financial resources to meet the overwhelming need. Further, civil society organisations (CSOs) in Ukraine – including OPDs – experience major challenges accessing the large flows of humanitarian funding coming into the country. Processes are complex and not yet suited to national and local organisations, despite the humanitarian commitment towards localisation. A particular challenge is a lack of resources dedicated to building the capacity of CSOs, including OPDs, that is needed for localisation to become a reality.

The Achievements:

CBM International chose to implement its available funding for humanitarian assistance in Ukraine through OPDs. Over three years €6.6 million was allocated through a mechanism which enabled a rapid and highly flexible response. The funding mechanism allowed lead OPD partners to provide small grants to local OPDs and enabled the support provided to meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities.

Through the funding model the programme was able to:

- Deliver a wide range of individualised support to people with disabilities and their families, reaching more than 50,000 people over the course of the programme.
- Allocate resources to strengthen OPDs' skills, knowledge and activities in the areas of project management, engagement with the humanitarian sector, advocacy, and resource mobilisation.
- Fund research projects, including producing practical guidelines on humanitarian response such as accessible shelters, research into the situation of Ukrainians with disabilities living in residential care settings and more.
- Strengthen the Riga Disability Rights Academy⁷, which aims to empower representatives of OPDs, government institutions and advocacy groups with knowledge and skills on disability rights, accessibility and inclusive communication.

Key success factors and lessons learned:

The flexibility of the funding model was key to its success: The main elements of this model (see box 2) included: flexibility built into programme design and budgets from the outset; unrestricted funding allowing for the provision of a lump sum for programme activities rather than detailed budget lines; a small-grants mechanism to support local OPDs to provide localised support to people with disabilities; a mechanism to allow for one-off financial assistance to meet unique needs of persons with disabilities; and placing trust in local OPDs to make budgetary decisions. Adopting this model enabled the programme to respond in an agile way to the frequently changing context of persons with disabilities in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Frequently OPDs are asked to assist

⁷ <https://www.edf-feph.org/the-riga-academy-shared-learning-between-latvian-and-ukrainian-activists/>

in humanitarian response situations without receiving any funding- in this programme, it was not the case.

Swift disbursement of funds enabled OPDs to respond rapidly and efficiently to the changing needs of persons with disabilities: The speed and efficiency with which resources were allocated and decisions were made was crucial to its success. This enabled OPDs to respond in a quick and timely way to the multiple different needs of persons with disabilities. Factors that enabled speed were the pre-existing relationships with OPDs grounded in trust, alongside an efficient decision-making process in EDF which ensured that when requests for changes to use of funds were made, they were addressed immediately.

Clear structures and local autonomy enabled the programme to reach the most marginalised and provide individualised support: A central funding mechanism managed by EDF, allowed allocation of unrestricted funding to lead OPDs in all partner countries. Lead OPDs were then able to distribute funds through small grant programmes, to smaller and more localised OPDs. This meant funding could reach persons with disabilities in remote areas as well as persons with disabilities with complex needs. This model also enabled OPDs to provide targeted assistance to persons with disabilities and their families, including the provision of cash-based assistance to more than 1,000 persons with disabilities.

Box 2: Features of the EDF Funding Model

- **Rapid Response to Changing Contexts and Needs**
 - Immediate response of CBM/EDF to the varied and diverse needs of persons with disabilities.
 - Clear and responsive communication between OPDs and EDF programme management staff, leading to rapid responses to requests for changes in use of funding.
- **Flexibility Built into Budget Design**

- Flexibility built into the programme design, and associated budget, from the outset and maintained throughout the programme.
- Unrestricted funding which provided a lump sum for programme activities rather than detailed budget lines.
- Small grants mechanism which enabled local organisations to identify activities needed to provide localised support to people with disabilities.
- Cash-based assistance, which was provided to over 1,000 persons with disabilities.
- Mechanism to allow for one-off financial assistance to meet unique needs of persons with disabilities.
- Putting trust in local organisations to make decisions.
- Being able to provide targeted financial assistance to families.
- Flexibility to exceed limits in urgent cases.
- **Structure**
 - The funding mechanism allowed reaching those most marginalised through its structure which consisted of a central funding mechanism managed by a lead OPD/umbrella organisation, with a chain of links to smaller organisations.

2.3 Facilitating meaningful engagement with the humanitarian response in Ukraine

A key aspect of this programme involved facilitating and building meaningful engagement of OPDs with the humanitarian response system in Ukraine, in neighbouring countries, and at the EU level. This required building constructive working relationships with key humanitarian stakeholders. A role pivotal to progress in this area was the disability focal point for Ukraine, hosted by WHO and embedded in the UN humanitarian response system.

The Challenge:

Working with the humanitarian system in Ukraine proved challenging and complex for OPDs. Both sectors had different purposes and ways of working, with partner OPDs primarily rights-based, and humanitarian entities being primarily needs-based. At the start of the crisis, OPDs were forced to rapidly pivot to operate as emergency response providers. They often found it challenging to integrate their activities with the wider humanitarian response in Ukraine. Challenges included reciprocal lack of understanding of different ways of working, limited time and availability of staff to participate in relevant cluster meetings and general inaccessibility and complexity of the UN humanitarian response cluster system. Furthermore, at the outset, OPDs in Ukraine were not seen as the natural partners for donors, the UN or other humanitarian organisations as these agencies are not used to funding and partnering with local OPDs.

The Achievements:

Increased engagement and positive working relationships between OPDs and the humanitarian sector across Ukraine and neighbouring countries and the EU has been a key success. Tangible examples of success include the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response plans; increased engagement of the two lead OPD partners in Ukraine⁸ with the humanitarian cluster system; increased awareness of disability inclusion and mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction planning at EU and national levels; and the implementation of accessibility audits of shelters for IDPs in Ukraine and Moldova. By the end of the programme there was also a greater recognition among OPDs of the value of engaging with the humanitarian response system (see box 3) leading to improved attitudes and mutually respectful working relationships. Despite these successes, however, there remain some

⁸ The lead OPD partners in Ukraine are League of the Strong and the National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities (NAPD).

outstanding challenges with meaningful engagement of OPDs in the humanitarian response and recovery in Ukraine.

Box 3: Benefits of working with the humanitarian sector⁹.

According to survey respondents, working with the humanitarian sector brought benefits including:

- increased awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities
- increased visibility of OPDs
- improved immediate response to humanitarian need of persons with disabilities
- efficiency and avoidance of duplication
- increased OPD expertise in humanitarian response

Key success factors and lessons learned:

Training, mentoring and guidance on engagement with the humanitarian sector was a critical success factor: EDF built relationships with key humanitarian agencies within Ukraine and at the EU level and facilitated engagement of OPDs with these agencies. When OPDs were reluctant to engage with humanitarian agencies, EDF provided support and advised on the value of engagement and, over the course of the programme, OPDs began to recognise some of the benefits of this engagement.

Strengthening technical resources of OPDs helped to raise their visibility, recognition and legitimacy with humanitarian actors: EDF supported strengthening the organisational capacity of OPDs. Training included financial management, due diligence processes and safeguarding. Whilst these efforts have improved the knowledge and systems of OPDs and has increased their visibility and legitimacy in the eyes of some humanitarian actors, ongoing challenges remain and there is a need for continued support to identify appropriate mechanisms to

⁹ Taken from the responses to the partner survey conducted as part of the final evaluation of this programme.

enable OPDs to contribute to and benefit from national humanitarian response efforts.

Disability focal points in the humanitarian system are critical for meaningful and effective engagement of OPDs with the

humanitarian response in Ukraine: As part of the coordinated response to the crisis in Ukraine, WHO supported an inter-agency disability advisor in humanitarian action. This role proved critical to improving engagement between OPDs and the humanitarian sector, especially in the later stages of the programme. This included through organising weekly meetings with OPDs, signposting key activities and opportunities to engage with the wider humanitarian response and providing mentoring to support OPDs' engagement with key agencies and the humanitarian cluster system. Through this role, OPDs were able to contribute to key processes, such as the development of the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Action Plan, as well as the 2024-2025 winterisation planning.

2.4 A person-centred and OPD-led approach builds trust while improving programme effectiveness and impact

The person-centred and OPD-led programming approach adopted by EDF built strong levels of reciprocal trust among partners involved with the programme which, in turn, helped to improve the effectiveness and impact of the programme.

The Challenge:

The programme worked across multiple countries and diverse cultures, in a rapidly changing emergency situation, to meet the varied needs of a complex disability population. Most partners were also operating in an emergency context that was new to them and which required them to change their usual ways of working to support persons with disabilities.

This meant the programme was frequently operating within a highly stressful, unpredictable, and extremely challenging working environment.

The Achievement:

The EDF programme was able to support partners to navigate the range of new challenges they faced. This, in turn, enabled OPDs to operate successfully in a highly challenging working environment and to achieve multiple successes across meeting needs, ensuring disability inclusion, improving OPD capacity in critical programme and financial management areas, and strengthening the wider disability movement.

Key success factors and lessons learned:

Reciprocal trust enabled rapid and relevant responses to the humanitarian crisis:

A culture of trust underpinned programme success. This included trust between CBM International, EDF, NGOs and OPDs across all partner countries. EDF trusted the national OPDs to prioritise and lead across needs response, research agendas and advocacy activities. OPDs noted trust between themselves and EDF as integral to the success of the programme and invaluable to boosting morale throughout the programme. In addition to this reciprocal trust between EDF and national and local OPD partners, trust in the programme was built through ensuring all project partners underwent due diligence processes from the outset, and through the provision of ongoing support from EDF to ensure partners adhered to programme and financial management good practice.

EDF's person-centred approach was highly valued by programme partners:

EDF's values-driven and person-centred approach was key to the success of the programme. EDF staff and representatives were approachable, attentive and responsive. They upheld close communication with OPDs, being available to them at all times, as well as taking the initiative to reach out. Communication covered emails, phone calls, online meetings, in-country visits, and joint learning events. All

modes of communication were accessible to people with different disabilities and communication needs.

EDF showed respect to OPDs for their firsthand knowledge and expertise around the changing situation in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Of particular note, was the value that EDF placed on the health and wellbeing of staff, with psychosocial support for staff made readily available.

A focus on localisation and empowerment enabled a more effective response for persons with disabilities: The implementation of this programme was grounded in key principles of localisation and empowerment and prioritising reaching those most marginalised, or harder-to-reach. This was manifested through EDF acting as a trusted central hub and placing trust in local organisations to identify the most relevant responses. An important factor contributing to this success was the programme's approach to building on pre-existing relationships and networks, including with community centres that were in touch with contextual community needs.

A critically reflective and responsive approach enabled ongoing learning and improvement: EDF undertook an evaluative and responsive approach to the programme. This included contracting a phased external evaluation across the programme which meant that they received critical feedback in stages, allowing them to adapt to feedback and strengthen the effectiveness of their response. One way in which this iterative evaluation approach contributed to strengthening the programme, is by highlighting challenges with OPD engagement with the humanitarian system in Ukraine. The programme was able to respond to this by building stronger relationships with the UN disability focal point and facilitating improved relationships between OPDs and the humanitarian sector. Whilst some challenges remain, due to the complexity of the humanitarian response system and the competing priorities of OPDs, the programme has improved visibility, credibility and

engagement of OPDs with the humanitarian sector in Ukraine, neighbouring countries and at the EU level.

2.5 A catalyst for a stronger disability movement

The OPD-led disability inclusive response to the Ukraine crisis has also acted as a catalyst for strengthening the disability movement in the region. By placing a focus on coordination and collaboration among OPDs the programme has been able to build a stronger disability movement among countries affected by the war in Ukraine.

The Challenge:

The humanitarian crisis led to a dynamic population of IDPs and refugees with disabilities with changing and complex needs within and beyond Ukraine. Responding to these needs demanded the efforts of a strong and united disability movement both within and across neighbouring countries, as well as through the mechanisms of the European Union. At the outset of the crisis, there were multiple OPDs responding in many ways to the rapid increase in need, with some OPDs being overwhelmed by the scale of need.

The Achievements:

The programme not only supported OPDs to respond to the rapid upsurge in need, but it also strengthened the disability movement across Ukraine and neighbouring countries such as Poland and Moldova (see case study 1).

Key success factors and lessons learned:

Strengthened organisational capacity enabled OPDs to deliver more effective responses to the humanitarian crisis: EDF supported OPDs to strengthen and professionalise their work in the critical areas of financial management systems, human resource management, quality assurance and safeguarding, data collection, and due diligence processes. This increased their professionalism placing them in stronger positions to

secure financial support from other agencies such as national and local government authorities and external donor agencies.

Regular and consistent communication between EDF and OPD

partners was key: Monthly partner meetings were noted as invaluable for multiple reasons. They had a strong thematic learning focus and allowed coordination and communication among OPDs. A small team of national consultants and advisors supported movement strengthening efforts within countries, while face-to-face partner meetings and the regular engagement of partner OPDs in EU level activities further strengthened collaboration and developed a stronger movement of OPDs across countries participating in the programme.

Coordination, collaboration and facilitation – essential elements to

build a stronger disability movement: EDF played a critical role in helping OPDs to navigate complex environments and to better coordinate their activities ‘bringing order to the chaos’. As the programme evolved, EDF’s support to OPDs focused increasingly on strengthening collaboration within and across countries. Key successes were the development of a coordinated action plan for OPD partners in Moldova, a strengthened OPD network in Poland (see case study 1), and improved coordination and collaboration between OPDs in Ukraine.

EDF provided opportunities for partners to come together in virtual (monthly) and in-person meetings and trainings, supporting partners to identify common and complementary areas of work, and helping to identify ways of working together to maximise impact.

“With partnership with EDF things became more structured and we began to focus on providing help to people with disabilities relocating from Ukraine. EDF brought structure to the chaos.” (Focus group participant, December 2024)

Case Study 1: Strengthening the OPD Network in Poland

The EDF Ukraine project enabled the organisation of networking and training workshops which created a collaborative network among OPDs in Poland and enabled members to provide more coordinated support to persons with disabilities. The Polish Disability Forum (PDF) shared an example of how they received a call from a foundation looking to find housing for a blind person from Ukraine. This was challenging because all the institutions for blind people in Poland were closed. However, thanks to the network of OPDs that had been brought together through this programme, PDF were able to contact organisations for recommendations and successfully found shelter and support for the person.

Training workshops provided through the programme also created opportunities for shared learning among OPDs and enabled OPD members to come together to discuss different topics such as digital accessibility, emergency first aid, medical aid and shared learning.

Skills building workshops and trainings were organised, including Polish sign language training for people from the police force, customs, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Labour. Disability inclusion training with simulation workshops were held with different states/different government sectors to raise awareness and understanding about how to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Support provided to the Polish Disability Forum therefore not only strengthened the network of OPDs working together in Poland but also improved disability awareness and understanding among key government agencies.

3. Recommendations

The lessons learned highlighted in this report lead to a set of recommendations for key stakeholders involved in current response and

recovery efforts in Ukraine. These recommendations are also relevant for those working in humanitarian response efforts in similar contexts.

EU Institutions:

- OPDs should be directly involved in the EU accession processes for Ukraine and Moldova ensuring disability rights are mainstreamed into plans. This means facilitating the meaningful engagement of OPDs in EU accession processes and plans through, for example, ensuring a disability focal point within the EU accession team and ensuring resources are allocated to support OPD engagement in EU accession efforts.

Humanitarian Agencies/Humanitarian Cluster in Ukraine:

- Humanitarian actors must commit to ensuring the continued mainstreaming of disability rights and persons with disabilities into Ukraine's humanitarian response and needs plans. This should include de-institutionalisation being systematically included across all clusters; detailed explanation/guidance on how disability inclusion will be incorporated into the humanitarian response; and detail on how disaggregated disability data will be collected.
- Adopt a twin-track approach to disability inclusion that mainstreams disability throughout the work of all the clusters whilst also providing targeted support to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Recognise the added value of local OPDs in responding to the needs of persons with disabilities affected by emergencies and develop funding mechanisms that can support a more localised response. This could take the form of a small grant facility specifically for OPDs as part of the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund, or the inclusion of OPDs as eligible partners in the Fund.

Donor Agencies:

- Recognise the added value of a flexible funding approach, particularly in the context of emergency/crisis situations, to enable agile, rapid and relevant responses to the most critical short and long-term needs of persons with disabilities.
- Support localised responses in emergency settings through increased investment in local OPDs. The EDF approach used for this programme presents a model to adapt in similar contexts. Consisting of a centrally managed fund, the allocation of flexible funds to national OPDs, and onward granting to small, local OPDs this model enables flexible and relevant responses that reach those at greatest risk of being left behind.

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of partner organisations

The following is the list of direct partners of European Disability Forum during the three years of the project. Phase 1 involved all 14 organisations; Phase 2 only involved organisations in Ukraine, Poland, Moldova and Latvia. The list is in alphabetical order.

Hungary

National Federation of Organisations of People with a Physical Disability (MEOSZ)

Latvia

Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations (SUSTENTO)

Lithuania

Lithuanian Disability Forum (LDF)

Moldova

Alliance of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (AOPD)

Centre for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CDPD)

Motivatie

Society for Deaf Republic Moldova (ASRM)

Poland

Polish Disability Forum (PFON)

Romania

Romanian National Disability Council (CNDR)

Slovakia

Slovak Disability Council (NROZP)

Ukraine

Inclusion Europe (with VGO Coalition)

League of the Strong (LoS)

National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities (NAPD)

Ukrainian Child Rights Network (UCRN)

Appendix 2: List of Key Publications Produced

European Disability Forum

- [Ukrainians with disabilities living in residential institutions: urgent action needed](#) (Report)
- [Supporting care transformation in Ukraine based on disability inclusion approach](#) (Presentation of the vision for new deinstitutionalisation strategy)
- [Ukraine Facility: ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities](#) (Advocacy)
- [European Parliament's Committees voted on establishing the Ukraine Facility](#) (Advocacy results)
- [EU funding plan for Ukraine reconstruction: Disability rights \(mostly\) included](#) (Advocacy results)
- [The impact of the war in Ukraine on the rights of persons with disabilities](#) (Report)
- [The Riga Academy – shared learning between Latvian and Ukrainian activists](#) (Article)
- [Young Ukrainians with disabilities fight for their rights – and the planet](#) (Article)
- [They understand me like no one else: peer support for injured Ukrainian soldier](#) (Article)
- [Ukraine: Best practice in deinstitutionalisation for children and young people with disabilities and high support needs](#) (Advocacy)
- [Supporting Ukrainians with disabilities](#) (Evaluation)
- [Sharing, learning, planning – EDF Ukraine programme partners meet in Poland](#) (Report)
- [Economic needs overshadow human rights: Impressions from EDF at Ukraine Recovery Conference](#) (Article)
- [The Warsaw Declaration: disability-inclusive recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine](#) (Declaration)
- [All you need to know on what to do to improve your disability rights inclusion as a donor in Ukraine](#) (Advocacy)
- [The EU Accession Process: Report and Guidance for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities](#) (Report and Guidance)
- [Donors must urgently fund disability organisations affected by US aid cuts](#) (Advocacy)
- [The war in Ukraine: impact on persons with disabilities](#) (Article)

National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities

- [Meeting with representatives of non-governmental organizations to discuss the submission of an Alternative Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (Article)
- [To World Autism Awareness Day – Virtual exhibition of works of young people with autism](#) (Article)
- [Psychological and Rehabilitation Camp for Children and Youth with Disabilities Launched along with their Parents in Vinnytsia](#) (Article)
- [Important Changes for People with Disabilities: NAPD Submits Proposals for Legislative Initiatives](#) (Article)
- [Report “People with Disabilities About Their Rights: Every Voice Matters”](#) (Report)
- [Meeting with the European Commissioner for Crisis Management and Humanitarian Aid](#) (Article)
- [Recommendations for addressing disability issues in humanitarian response by 2025](#) (Advocacy)

The League of the Strong

- [Shadow report on the observance of the rights of persons with disabilities in Ukraine](#) (Article and Report)
- [The impact of the war on the rights of people with disabilities in Ukraine](#) (Report)

Appendix 3: Ukraine Programme Evaluation Methodology

The overall evaluation methodology for this programme comprises a mixed method approach, capturing both quantitative and qualitative data. Research methods have included desk-based document reviews, key informant interviews, and country visits. The evaluation has been guided by both measuring against programme targets and deliverables and critically exploring areas of positive impact and areas for improvement. The methodological process was intended to be emergent and to change according to the demands of the process, with a report published at the end of each of the three phases.

- **Phase 1 project evaluation:** This took place at the end of the first phase of this programme, in July 2023 and reviewed outcomes from the first 12 months of programme implementation. This entailed a desk review of key programme documentation, an in-country visit to programme partners and project sites in Ukraine, and a series of virtual interviews with key internal and external stakeholders.
- **Mid-term review:** This took place mid-way through the second phase of the programme and reviewed activities from July 2023-March 2024. It entailed a desk review of internal and public facing documents produced by EDF and partners, a review of the Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plans for 2023 and 2024, participation in the partners' meeting in Poland in April 2024; and a series of virtual interviews with programme partners, EDF staff and relevant external stakeholders. Phase 2 also meant a deeper analysis of key issues highlighted in the Phase 1. These included developing a greater understanding of engagement with humanitarian response agencies, understanding the impact of advocacy activities, and the medium-term impact of activities conducted to strengthen organisational capacity

and sustainability of partner organisations, with a specific focus on safeguarding mechanisms and processes

- **Final Evaluation:** This took place in December 2024 and reviewed the final period of the programme, as well as providing an overall assessment of the programme's activities and impact during phase 1 and 2 of the programme. It entailed a desk review of relevant project monitoring reports, annual review reports, and key publications produced over the course of the programme; an online survey of OPD partners, EDF secretariat staff, and key external stakeholders involved with the programme; two focus group discussions on key themes for discussion identified through previous evaluation processes and the online survey; external stakeholder interviews. It reviews the achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from the programme and makes recommendations for future programming to support OPDs responding to the crisis in Ukraine and similar crises in other countries or humanitarian contexts.

Document credits

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