

COMMENTS ON THE UNFPA DRAFT COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR UKRAINE

Second regular session 2024

Comments by Netherlands	UNFPA country and regional office response to comments
<p>The Kingdom of the Netherlands is very pleased to see the CPD for Ukraine (2025-2029), has a strong focus on the combatting gender-based violence (GBV), especially considering Russia’s continued war of aggression against Ukraine and the vulnerable position of women and girls in front line regions. It would however be good to also mention explicitly the assistance to victims/survivors of SGBV in this context within the CPD.</p>	<p>Based on comments from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the CPD has been updated, and the following text, including response to CRSV, has been added to para. 17.</p> <p>UNFPA highly appreciates the assessment of the Ukraine CPD and its strong focus on combatting gender-based violence. UNFPA’s approach to addressing the needs of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence is to ensure the availability of a fully functioning gender-based violence response system.</p> <p>UNFPA provides services and assistance to GBV survivors, including survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), in line with the GBV guiding principles: safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination.</p> <p>UNFPA places survivors’ rights to dignity, privacy, confidentiality, safety, security, and protection from harm at the centre of our response in conflict and fragile settings around the world, particularly in Ukraine. UNFPA’s efforts in humanitarian settings are tailored to the needs of women and girls affected by all forms of GBV, including CRSV, and are based on the principles of non-discrimination, do-no-harm, and a survivor-centred approach. Furthermore, UNFPA works to ensure that all gathering and management of information is conducted following safe and ethical standards to ensure the dignity, safety, and respect of survivors.</p> <p>Thus, the Ukraine country programme document applies an integrated and survivor-centred approach to its programme design</p>

to further strengthen the national GBV response and prevention system and develop specific capacities of service providers at all levels to address the needs of all GBV survivors, including the specific needs of survivors of CRSV.

Since the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion, the UNFPA Country Office in Ukraine has been actively engaged in responding to CRSV. In June 2022, following a request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, UNFPA Ukraine launched a network of Survivor Relief Centres—a safe space for people affected by war, particularly those who survived CRSV.

As of now, 12 stationary and 3 mobile centres are functioning across the country, including regions close to the front line (Kherson, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia), providing holistic support to GBV survivors, including CRSV survivors.

The new country programme will further enhance this work and support the Government in strengthening GBV prevention and response by enhancing legislation, policies, programmes and accountability frameworks to bolster the national GBV prevention and response system. This will address the increased GBV risks resulting from the war, including CRSV and other forms of violence. Key interventions will include the provision of technical expertise to reinforce national and subnational GBV coordination, policies for comprehensive survivor-centred services, and safe, ethical handling of GBV cases and data management, including those related to CRSV. Additionally, there will be technical expertise and support for the development of a national system for continuous GBV service providers training, integrating innovative knowledge management approaches and digital solutions. The

	<p>programme will also enhance universal access to SRH services during the war and recovery, especially life-saving services, including health system response to GBV and CRSV survivors' needs, developing capacities to provide clinical management of rape, ensuring that survivors have access to comprehensive services.</p> <p>Further on, UNFPA in Ukraine will address wartime gaps and challenges of GBV service provision, such as services to male survivors of sexual violence, early warning systems and prevention within vulnerable communities, and access to services in rural and frontline areas. Among other issues, UNFPA will focus on enhancing the capacities of healthcare workers in gender-responsive, survivor-centred service provision, addressing barriers to comprehensive SRH/GBV care; providing comprehensive emergency GBV prevention and response through specialized services, including to CRSV survivors; enhancing municipalities' capacity to establish stable and effective GBV prevention and response systems and deliver sustainable, high-quality services; coordinating and intersectoral responses tailored to emerging GBV risks and vulnerable groups; and developing the capacities of civil society organizations, municipalities and municipal-level actors, the national police and specialized service providers, to ensure an effective GBV response, including to CRSV, during the war and in post-war recovery.</p> <p>The CPD implementation plan and annual workplans will include much more specific details of concrete actions to respond to the needs of survivors of GBV and CRSV.</p>
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The Kingdom of the Netherlands is very pleased to see the CPD refer explicitly to Ukraine's Demographic Strategy until 2030 and believes UNFPA could be of great value in aiding the implementation of this document. We are especially interested in UNFPA's possible role in strengthening access to maternal care, as well as family planning and sexual education.

The new country programme for Ukraine applies an integrated approach to further strengthening access to maternal care, family planning, and sexual education both through humanitarian interventions and longer-term recovery and development activities.

In particular, through this country programme UNFPA will support the enhancement and resilience of maternal health facilities to ensure they are equipped to provide quality care even in the areas close to the front line. UNFPA will also invest in the provision of training for healthcare providers on best practices in maternal health care, ensuring that they have the skills necessary to manage pregnancies and childbirth complications. In the policy domain, UNFPA will advocate and provide technical expertise to develop and implement policies to ensure that maternal health services are accessible to all women, especially in underserved areas. UNFPA's role in family planning will specifically focus on integrating family planning services with other health services at the primary health care level to create a holistic approach to reproductive health care. This will also include ensuring the availability of a wide range of contraceptive methods and making them accessible to the most vulnerable women and girls as well as raising awareness about the benefits of family planning and dispelling myths and misconceptions about contraceptive use among young women and adolescent girls.

UNFPA will promote and support the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools as well as other innovative approaches to provide young people with accurate and age-appropriate information about their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

	<p>Given the challenging environment in Ukraine due to the ongoing war, which results in a highly volatile and unpredictable situation, the successful implementation of the new UNFPA country programme will significantly depend on several factors. Donors' financial support is paramount. The complex and unstable conditions in Ukraine require a robust and adaptable response from UNFPA. Adequate funding is essential to sustain and expand maternal care, family planning and sexual education services, which are crucial for the well-being of the population, particularly women and children.</p> <p>Unearmarked funding is particularly valuable in such contexts. It provides UNFPA with the flexibility to allocate resources where they are most needed, quickly adapting to the changing needs on the ground. This flexibility is crucial for addressing immediate humanitarian needs and for long-term planning.</p>
<p>We are grateful to see the inclusion of progressive language on SRHR and underline the importance of sexual minority rights within this context. We fully support and appreciate Ukraine's efforts towards the strengthening of LGBTQI+ rights and encourage UNFPA to consider its role within this domain.</p>	<p>The new UNFPA country programme in Ukraine is making significant strides in addressing the rights and needs of LGBTQI+ individuals. By integrating initiatives into its broader goals of enhancing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and combating gender-based violence (GBV), the programme upholds the principle of 'leaving no one behind'. This approach ensures that LGBTQI+ populations are considered in the development and implementation of policies and services related to SRH and GBV.</p> <p>Key programme goals and initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Barrier-free access to SRH services</i>: The programme prioritizes tailoring SRH services to meet the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including LGBTQI+ individuals who may face unique challenges due to stigma and discrimination.

- *Enhanced institutional capacities:* UNFPA aims to strengthen institutional capabilities at the regional and municipal levels to provide high-quality, comprehensive GBV and SRH services tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations, including LGBTQI+ groups. This includes ensuring accessibility in remote and war-affected regions.
- *Integration of SRH and GBV services:* In the context of humanitarian efforts and post-war recovery, the programme integrates SRH and GBV services to support LGBTQI+ individuals comprehensively.

UNFPA in Ukraine will further strengthen its role through the implementation of its country programme and by working jointly with other UN agencies. The following are key areas:

- *Policy advocacy and technical support:* UNFPA will strengthen its role by continuing to advocate for inclusive policies that protect the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals. Providing technical support to the Government to develop and implement these policies can ensure that they are evidence-based and effectively address the needs of sexual minorities.
- *Capacity development:* Enhancing the capacities of local civil society organizations and municipal authorities to integrate LGBTQI+ rights into their programmes is crucial. This includes training on gender-transformative approaches and ensuring that service providers are equipped to address the needs of LGBTQI+ individuals.
- *Data and evidence:* Utilizing data and evidence to highlight the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals can inform better programme design and implementation. This evidence-based approach can help in monitoring and

	<p>evaluating the impact of initiatives on sexual minority rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Partnership and coordination:</i> Strengthening partnerships with organizations that focus on LGBTQI+ rights, including international bodies, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based groups, can enhance the effectiveness of UNFPA efforts. Coordinated actions can lead to more comprehensive and sustainable outcomes for sexual minorities.● <i>Innovative solutions:</i> Implementing innovative solutions, particularly digital tools and interactive platforms, can help remove barriers to accessing SRHR and GBV services for LGBTQI+ individuals. These solutions can provide discreet and safe access to information and services. This is particularly important in contexts where stigma and discrimination are prevalent. <p>By continuing to focus on these areas, UNFPA will further strengthen its role in promoting and protecting the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals within its programmes in Ukraine.</p>
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