

Case study III - Ukraine

Headline	
SAFERUKRAINE.COM – APPLYING TECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES	
Domains of change	
Please mark each domain that is significantly covered within the case study. At least one box should be marked, and as many as appropriate. You should only mark a box if there is reported change, not if it is only expected in the future.	
Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability, and/or the realisation of their rights	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support people's rights;	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights;	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in the participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability in their own development	x
Changes in local leadership and ownership of development and humanitarian work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic Information	
Name of Danish CSO	Mission East – Emergency and Development (MEED)
Name of Southern partner(s)	Dorcas Ukraine & Wodan International
Year of submission	2022
Name of project / programme / approach	<i>SaferUkraine.com - Coping skills for personal protection in hard-to-reach areas</i>
Project / programme period	September 2022 – ongoing, end date depending on needs
Country	Ukraine
Constituency	Ukrainian population with protection needs, particularly targeting hard-to-reach areas
Summary (1000 characters only, including spaces)	The purpose of the intervention was to pilot an approach using relatively new technology to refine our humanitarian responses by assisting people in need in hard-to-reach areas with protection guidance, allowing them to improve own safety. A social media campaign was designed to distribute materials with protection messaging to selected target segments. The campaign was linked to a website established for the same purpose and complemented by physical brochure hand-out in areas where some access was possible. The target group would need to actively participate in the campaign to benefit from the protection awareness messages, by choosing to watch a video, visit the website or grab a brochure. This case study hence covers the domain of change related to changes in participation. 30,500 hard copies of

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	protection materials were obtained by participants, and in two months, 47,095 videos were watched, and the website was accessed 22,261 times, with likely overlap.
Context	
<p>In September 2022, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts were under Russian occupation and the entire country of Ukraine was subject to attacks by missiles, drones, and the like. This placed civilians at high risk of becoming casualties of war. Despite this risk, many citizens were staying in their home areas, unprepared for potential escalation of the fighting and threat to their safety. Attempts made by the UN and other humanitarian actors to evacuate populations in besieged areas through humanitarian corridors had proven highly challenging, and government recommendations for timely evacuation appeared to have a limited effect in many areas. Reluctance to evacuate was fuelled by many factors. Some people were incapacitated by old age, disability, lack of financial means or commitment to care for family members or farm animals, while others were numbed by uncertainties of what the future would bring, or fear of what escape would entail; during as well as after. According to INSO's Global Safety and Access Review, in Q3 of 2022, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Kharkiv and Mykolaiv had the most security incidents. Threats towards nuclear plants and of nuclear attacks prevailed. During the following months, the Russians appeared to be specifically targeting service infrastructure, of which 40% was heavily damaged. Large populations groups were therefore without access to electricity, gas and/or water, which was particularly concerning with the winter approaching. Access to the population groups most in need was however difficult. In the besieged areas, majority of humanitarian actors had no access at all, while neighbouring oblasts such as Mykolaiv and Kharkiv were considered high-risk areas with limited access.</p>	
Objectives	
<p>Contributing to outcome 2 of the country engagement ToC, the purpose of the intervention was to pilot an approach using relatively new technology to refine our humanitarian responses by assisting people in need in hard-to-reach areas with protection guidance, allowing them to improve own safety. MEED believes that technology can be utilised for transforming our humanitarian interventions. MEED's extensive knowledge on utilising social media to engage and communicate with population groups in Denmark was used as an expertise in designing a social media campaign - as a humanitarian technology - targeting people in need in hard-to-reach areas in Ukraine. The campaign required active participation from the target group, who were encouraged to watch videos and visit the campaign website to access protection materials. MEED has with our partners developed and distributed 17 brochures and 16 videos on protection topics, including planning of safe evacuation, risk management, safe behaviour in areas with hostilities and in cases of nuclear disasters, war injury first aid, winter coping, and mine awareness. To ensure widespread access, these materials were distributed through several channels. The website www.saferukraine.com (with an equivalent Ukrainian address) was established and serves as a central hub for accessing majority of the videos and brochures. This worked also as a landing page for a targeted social media campaign, effectively maximising the reach and impact of the resources. In Kharkiv and Mykolaiv, where some access was possible, this was supplemented by distribution of brochures and training (on brochure content) of 57 resource persons, facilitating brochure distribution. It was a clear goal that the protection material would reflect perceptions of local authorities on the relevant protection risks as well as expert advice on how best to address the identified protection risks.</p>	

Change

The initiative would allow for monitoring of the participation by the target group, but not the extent to which the gained knowledge led to specific changes in the lives of affected people by improving their safety. Therefore, the available evidence is only supporting the domain of change related to ***‘changes in the participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability in their own development’***. 10,000 brochures were distributed in Mykolaiv through public transport systems, in supermarkets and in pharmacies, and additional 20,500 brochures were distributed in Kharkiv through public heating points, where people gathered to get warm during the winter. In Kharkiv, this was supplemented by 1,000 A2 posters and 1,300 A6 stickers displayed by authorities around the city. The target group participated by actively picking brochures of their choice. The choice to pick a brochure indicates an interest in the protection message communicated through the brochures and a wish to reduce personal protection risks. However, due to restricted access, it was not possible to establish the number of people who picked one or several brochures, meaning the exact number of participants receiving protection messages through hard copy brochures. For this reason, participants in these activities were not included in MEED’s annual beneficiary count.

While the website and the social media campaign were launched in late 2022, and only ran a few days in 2022, results are here presented with a sneak peek into early 2023. During the period December 22nd 2022 – February 28th 2023 the website had 22,261 ***unique visits*** by people inside Ukraine. During the same period, the social media campaign ***reached*** 4,619,376 people in Ukraine. This resulted in 377,457 ***thruplays*** (the standard measurement for assessing social media campaign success), which means that the videos were viewed for at least 15 seconds this many times. With an interest in participants benefitting from the full protection message (most videos take several minutes), the data shows that ***75%*** of a video were watched 73,270 times, ***95%*** were watched 47,095 times and ***100%*** were watched 18,100 times. While participants viewing 75% of the videos would receive majority of the protection message, they are likely not to perceive the video message as relevant for their protection status, if they are not bothered to watch it through. However, as the final part of the videos contains no protection message but rather provide information on the actors involved in the video production, the participants viewing 95% of the videos can be considered as having watched through the full delivery of the protection message, and thereby actively participating in the development of their own protection awareness. The extent to which the increased awareness results in behaviour change is, as with majority of awareness campaigns, unknown. Still, the results appear promising, reflecting only a two-month period.

It is noteworthy that the content shared during the campaign has received significant traction, indicating that individuals recognise the relevance and value of the messages, leading them to share with their network. This organic sharing further extends the reach of the campaign and underscores its potential impact on a wider audience. 785 ***posts*** were shared by the social media campaign participants, and the campaign received 3,633 ***reactions*** during the period, with most of these reactions being positive in nature. 156 ***comments*** were received, ranging from participants appreciating the campaign to participants expressing various versions of the perception that particular protection messages will never be applicable to their areas of residence due to expected positive war developments. 57% of participants interacting with the campaign are females, majority between the age of 35-64. Participants who actively engage with the campaign can be found in multiple oblasts throughout Ukraine, including Zaporizhia and Kherson.

Contribution

The Ukrainian branch of MEED's alliance partner, the NGO Dorcas Ukraine, had earlier in 2022 with the private sector partner, the German risk management company Wodan, and the Mayor's Office in Zaporizhia identified a number of protection risks and developed brochures, communicating related protection messages, for distribution in Zaporizhia. Following the positive results from the post distribution monitoring survey (see evidence section), MEED, Dorcas and Wodan took initiative to form these protection messages into videos. The Mayor's Office in Mykolaiv expressed interest in distribution of the brochures in Mykolaiv and distributed some of the videos through their official website. Their expected participation in identification of additional protection risks and development of related materials were however never realised. In Kharkiv, the Office of Reforms (handling NGO interactions on behalf of Kharkiv Mayor's Office) asked to be involved in the initiative, identified additional protection risks, and participated in the development of related materials. The Kharkiv Office of Reforms further took lead in the distribution of brochures through the public heating points established in the city. While neither MEED nor Dorcas due to security risks had access to Mykolaiv or Kharkiv during the first months of the initiative, Wodan as security specialist were able to access the areas. Wodan was hence able on behalf of MEED to train resource persons (in the case of Kharkiv selected by the Office of Reforms) who would be involved in the brochure distribution. Wodan also facilitated the physical transport of the brochures to both locations.

Besides project strategy and coordination, the main value added by MEED staff was the development of the website and the planning, operation, and monitoring of the social media campaign. The initiative was in 2022 co-funded between MEED (80%) and Dorcas (20%). The MEED contribution included approx.40% Danida SPA funding and 60% own funds. The initiative continues in 2023 funded by Danida SPA funding.

Lessons

- An obvious challenge with humanitarian technology in remote implementation is that beneficiary interaction is restricted, whereby possibilities for feedback and monitoring are limited. The comments received through the social media campaign did however allow for feedback, and both local partner staff and local authorities acted as a form of focus group in assessing the relevance of the materials. Relying on the limited access by the private sector partner and on local authorities for trainings, provision of materials and follow-ups proved difficult. In Mykolaiv, the role of authorities was more limited than had been expected. Even in Kharkiv where the authorities played a key role, they could not allocate resources towards participant counts. As these are authorities in a country at war, this is of course very understandable, and an expected programmatic risk that proved difficult to mitigate.
- The presented findings of the first two months of the social media campaign suggest that the campaign is effective in reaching and engaging a large number of people, resulting in increased awareness of the protection messages. While this includes people in hard-to-reach areas that would otherwise not have had access to the protection messages, participation among target groups in Luhansk and Donetsk has been limited. The learning is thus that the approach is not suitable for all hard-to-reach areas.
- While development of materials involves some cost, the social media campaign itself is highly cost-efficient, resulting in extremely low costs per beneficiary. The campaign modality allows for close data-based monitoring feeding into adjustment of target segments to facilitate highest possible value for money and effective reach of selected population groups. A campaign may run for years with hardly any costs reaching more and more people in need.

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- Based on the preliminary findings from piloting this approach, replicating the approach in other settings where social media are commonly used, focusing on locally relevant awareness raising agendas may very well be relevant, for MEED or other actors.

Evidence

In the summer of 2022, before Dorcas Ukraine had to evacuate their office in Zaporizhia, they, together with the German risk management company Wodan and the Mayor's Office in Zaporizhia, identified a number of protection risks and developed brochures, communicating related protection messages. Wodan trained 20 resource persons (on the brochure content) who took part in the distribution of the brochures in Zaporizhia. Subsequently, when the area was still accessible, Dorcas completed a post monitoring distribution survey, interviewing both 13 of the trained resource persons (TOTs) and 125 of the recipients of brochures on the relevance of this protection campaign. 12 of the 13 interviewed ToTs gave the highest score, when asked if the training had sufficiently equipped them to communicate the protection messages to the brochure recipients. 61% of brochure recipients (campaign participants) assessed the received protection message as "very beneficial" and 39% as "beneficial", and 99% testified that the protection materials provided them with new skills or knowledge.

Examples of brochures:

The image displays three brochures developed for winter and emergency preparedness. The first brochure, 'Підготовка До зими' (Preparation for Winter), focuses on winter threats and solutions, including energy management and home heating. The second, 'M.A.R.C.H.', is a first aid guide with five steps: 1. Massive bleeding, 2. Airway management, 3. Respiration, 4. Circulation, and 5. Hypothermia prevention. The third, 'EMERGENCY GRAP AND GO BAG', provides a checklist of essential items for an emergency kit, such as food, water, first aid, and communication tools. All brochures feature logos for WODAN INTERNATIONAL, MISSIONEAST, and Dorcas, along with the Ukrainian national emblem.

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Training by WODAN in Mykolaiv (left) and Kharkiv (right).



Bezpechna Ukraina

Головна зима евакуації Виживання Радіаційної надзвичайної

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