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CURRENT POSITION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN IN UKRAINE

The paper is devoted to analysis of the current position of internally displaced women in Ukraine based on the results of a special sociological survey, supported by the UN Population Fund in 2015. The survey was conducted by the experts of the Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms in collaboration with Social Monitoring Center (NGO), and covered the population of five conflict-affected regions, which have accepted the largest inflows of displaced population.

The results of sociological survey are used to outline women's experience of displacement through analysis of its causes and circumstances. The changes in socio-economic status of displaced women at the labour market are traced, as well as some dimensions of their income accumulation. The issues of a population access to various types of public services in the host communities are studied.

In conclusions, the need for incorporating gender-sensitive approach into implementation of policies of IDPs support and integration in the host communities is grounded. Some general recommendations on coordination of efforts to solve the problems of displaced women are provided.

Key words: *internally displaced persons (IDPs), gender-sensitive approach, needs assessment, armed conflict, Eastern Ukraine.*

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ СТАНОВИЩА ТА ОЦІНКА ПОТРЕБ ЖІНОК – ВНУТРІШНЬО ПЕРЕМІЩЕНИХ ОСІБ В УКРАЇНІ

Стаття присвячена аналізу сучасного становища внутрішньо переміщених осіб – жінок в Україні за результатами спеціального соціологічного опитування, що було підтримане Фондом народонаселення ООН у 2015 р. Дослідження виконано фахівцями Українського центру соціальних реформ у співпраці з

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Центром «Соціальний моніторинг», та охоплювало населення п'яти регіонів, що прийняли найбільший потік переселенців. Результати соціологічного опитування використані для окреслення загального досвіду переміщення опитаних жінок, включаючи причини та обставини переїзду. У статті простежено зміни в соціально-економічному статусі переміщених жінок на ринку праці, а також особливості формування їхніх сукупних доходів. Досліджено питання доступності різних типів суспільних послуг у громадах, які прийняли внутрішньо переміщених осіб.

У висновках обґрунтовано доцільність застосування гендерно-чутливого підходу до розробки та впровадження заходів політики з підтримки внутрішньо переміщених осіб та сприяння їх адаптації в громадах, що прийняли їх. Представлено деякі загальні рекомендації щодо координації зусиль з вирішення актуальних проблем переміщених жінок.

Ключові слова: внутрішньо переміщені особи (ВПО), гендерно-чутливий підхід, оцінка потреб, збройний конфлікт, Східна Україна.

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПОЛОЖЕНИЯ И ОЦЕНКА ПОТРЕБНОСТЕЙ ЖЕНЩИН – ВНУТРЕННЕ ПЕРЕМЕЩЕННЫХ ЛИЦ В УКРАИНЕ

Статья посвящена анализу особенностей положения внутренне перемещенных лиц – женщин в Украине по материалам специального социологического опроса, поддержанного Фондом народонаселения ООН в 2015 г. Исследование проведено экспертами Украинского центра социальных реформ в сотрудничестве с Центром «Социальный мониторинг», и охватывало население пяти регионов, принявших наибольший поток переселенцев. Результаты социологического опроса использованы для описания общего опыта перемещения опрошенных женщин, включая причины и обстоятельства переезда. В статье прослежены изменения в социально-экономическом статусе перемещенных женщин на рынке труда, а также особенности формирования их доходов. Исследован вопрос доступности различных типов общественных услуг в принимающих общинах. В выводах обоснована необходимость применения гендерно-чувствительного подхода к разработке и внедрению политики поддержки внутренне перемещенных лиц и их адаптации в принимающих общинах. Представлены общие рекомендации относительно координации усилий, направленных на решение актуальных проблем перемещенных женщин.

Ключевые слова: внутренне перемещенные лица (ВПЛ), гендерно-чувствительный подход, оценка потребностей, вооруженный конфликт, Восточная Украина.

Introduction. Political destabilization and armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine have led to development of a new social phenomenon – large-scale internal displacement of people. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center estimates, there were 1.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine as on August 2015 (IDMC, 2015). Such processes posed a new development challenge for the whole country, as thousands of people had to leave their homes; they still are particularly vulnerable in many aspects, facing unavailability of permanent housing, unemployment and a lack of income. In practice, internal displacement is associated with losses of dwellings, land plots, usual environment, as well as disintegration of family ties. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) could also be exposed to the increased risks of social exclusion, discrimination and stigmatizing in the host communities. Women tend to be disproportionately affected by the crisis, prevailing among IDPs and having additional obligations of caring for children, elderly and disabled persons. Displaced women could face multiple discrimination in terms of placement in jobs and opportunities of income,

access to housing and public services. Besides, the consequences of displacement could be observed in the long-term run, affecting economic stability, facilitating humanitarian and environmental problems, posing new treats in terms of population health and epidemiological safety, etc. Finally, internal displacement affected the regional development as well, leading to the increase in territorial disproportions and inequality.

Literature overview. Globally, the processes of displacement call for attention of many developmental agencies and international human rights organizations, including the UN Refugee Agency, UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Health Organization (WHO) and others. A number of comprehensive and complementary guidelines have been developed to outline the standards for the protection of IDPs, including the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UNHCR, 1998), IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IASC, 2010) and others (UNHCR, 2000). To reflect the guidelines, Ukraine's government has adopted the Law «On the rights and freedoms of citizens and legal regime in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine» (April 2014) and the Law «On ensuring of rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons» (October 2014), amended other national regulations concerning the protection of human rights and freedoms. The Comprehensive State Program «On support, social adaptation and reintegration of the citizens of Ukraine, who have moved from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and areas of the anti-terrorist operation to other regions of Ukraine, for a period until 2017» was developed and approved at the end of 2015. The Program consists of a range of legislative, institutional, financial and practical tasks and activities to address the current problems of IDPs and to ensure their integration into the host communities.

Presently, there are few academic papers on the phenomenon of internal displacement in Ukraine. Hnatyuk (2014) provided the first statistical analysis of the IDP flows and amendments of the national legislation to address the displacement challenges. Some authors also argue about deteriorated epidemiological situation caused by the conflict, including prevalence of communicable diseases (Acosta et al, 2014; Huk et al, 2015). A few «quick» surveys of IDPs have been conducted by international agencies to address the emergency needs of vulnerable population groups (Ukraine NGO Forum, 2015; UNDP, 2015), while analytical data are summarized in the regular monitoring reports (UNHCR 2015a; UNHCR 2015b). Finally, the comprehensive studies of the conflict consequences have been realized by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, providing not only estimations of the conflict-associated losses, but also determining priorities for public policies to provide an efficient response (NAS of Ukraine, 2015a; NAS of Ukraine, 2015b). However, there is a permanent lack in reliable and up-to-date data on the current position of the numerous displaced contingents, their acute problems and needs.

Purpose of the paper. To address the current data gaps on the needs of IDPs, a special sociological survey has been launched by the UNFPA in autumn of 2015 (2015 UNFPA Survey). Though the primary goals of the survey were targeted at assessment of gender-based violence and availability of service-providers for survivors of violence in the conflict-affected regions, the obtained data provided a valuable source of information on the current position of displaced women, their needs and aspirations for further life. In this paper, we intend to present the key findings of the Survey, describing the background characteristics of displaced women, causes for their displacement, current problems and needs that emerge in the host communities.

Methodology and data. In general, there are two basic data sources related to registration of IDPs in Ukraine, including the Interdepartmental Coordination Staff (ICS) of the State

Service for Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP). The actual data provided by these two authorities could differ significantly, as they reflect various aspects of displacement. In particular, the ICS conducts registration of those persons, who have applied for assistance in re-settlement and displacement; the relevant information is kept in the Register of Citizens of Ukraine, displaced from the non-government controlled areas (NGCAs) and areas affected by anti-terrorist operation (ATO). The MoSP is registering those persons, who have applied to social protection authorities to receive the eligible pensions and social allowances at new places of residence. In reality, the registration of the MoSP may cover not only displaced persons, but also those people, who actually live in NGCAs, but periodically visit the government-controlled area (GCA) to receive their benefits (this phenomenon was called the 'pension tourism' by the experts). Obviously, the actual number of IDPs remains underreported by both data sources, complicating the adequate assessment of needs and consequences. Moreover, it is particularly challenging to define the «stable» IDPs, i.e. those persons, who require some durable solutions in terms of housing, placement in jobs and income support.

The 2015 UNFPA Survey was conducted by experts of the Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms in collaboration with the Social Monitoring Center based on international Tools Manual (RHRC Consortium, 2004), adjusted for Ukraine's socio-cultural context by national experts. The geography of the Survey covered 5 conflict-affected regions of Ukraine, including Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia and Kharkiv oblasts, as well as at the GCAs of Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts. Two target groups of the population were selected:

1) women aged 18+ from the permanent population of the host communities; they were sampled based on the actual demographics available, with consideration of the sex-age composition and urban-rural structure of settlements;

2) displaced women aged 18+ staying in the host communities of the Survey regions; they were proportionally sampled based on the official data of the MoSP on distribution of the registered IDPs among the host regions as on August 2015.

The total realized population sample was 2,512 women, of them – 1,505 local women of the host communities and 1,007 displaced women. The Survey was conducted through individual interviews at places of residence (location) of respondents. While the random selection was strictly applied for local never-displaced women, this approach failed in reaching displaced women, so they were interviewed based on the snow ball method.

The Survey Program consisted of several blocks of questions, including socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and their experience of displacement (if applicable), prevalence of gender-based violence during the conflict, current mental health, and other issues. The present data analysis is based on the background characteristics of the surveyed persons, incorporated into the main database.

Socio-demographic background of the surveyed women. Background socio-demographic characteristics of the surveyed women are presented in Table 1. The prevailing number of women (52.2 % of local residents and 66.2 % of IDPs) was in the active reproductive age range (18–49). There were more women of older ages among the local population of the host communities, as the sample was based on the actual demographic structure of the population, while selection of the displaced women was done based on their accessibility for interviews.

Most of the surveyed women had tertiary education (71.1 % of local women and 64.9 % of IDP women), while about one-third of them had secondary education. Only a small percent of women reported that they have primary education, which closely correlates to the general structure of Ukraine's population by level of education attainments.

Almost 70 % of the interviewed local women had no children under the age of 18 in their households; 22.4 % of them had 1 minor child, 7.8 % of the surveyed women had 2 minor children and more. The share of displaced women living together with minor children was larger (almost a half of the surveyed persons), as well as the share of women living with two children and more (the maximal number reported was 10 children). A higher concentration of women with minor children among IDPs looks quite natural, as fears for children and expectations of better future for them were regarded among motivating factors for displacement during the conflict.

Table 1. Background socio-demographic characteristics of the surveyed women

Distribution of women by background characteristics, in %		
Characteristics	Local women, N=1,505	Displaced women, N=1,007
Age group		
18–29	18.5	21.5
30–39	17.6	28.1
40–49	16.1	16.6
50–59	17.5	13.4
60 and over	30.3	20.4
Region of interview		
Donetsk oblast	20.3	46.8
Dnipropetrovsk oblast	29.1	12.4
Zaporizhia oblast	15.7	10.7
Lugansk oblast	11.0	10.8
Kharkiv oblast	24.0	19.3
Education		
Primary (below 9 grades)	2.4	1.0
Base (incomplete) secondary (9 grades)	5.1	3.4
Complete secondary/Vocational training school	29.9	29.7
Base tertiary (college, high institutions of I-II ac. grades)	26.4	30.8
Complete tertiary (university, high institutions of III-IV ac. grades)	34.7	34.1
Scientific degree (PhD, etc.)	1.2	0.9
Other	0.3	
Marital status		
Currently married	45.7	46.2
Currently partnered	5.4	3.3
Currently non-married /non-partnered	37.2	40.8
Never married/partnered	11.6	9.7

Source: author's calculations based on the 2015 UNFPA Survey.

As to the marital history, 9.7 % of women among IDPs and 11.6 % of women from local communities reported that they have never been married or partnered. More than a half of all ever-married/partnered women told that they are currently married. Importantly, the marital structure of the surveyed women was quite different from the total marital structure of the female population of Ukraine. About 40% of the interviewed women reported that they were not married/partnered at the moment of interview, while the corresponding share of women was only 17.2 % based on the 2007 Ukraine's Demography and Health Survey (UDHS, 2008). The reasons of such discrepancies could be associated with challenges of population surveys in the on-going conflict. After several waves of men's recruitment to the army, some women might be reluctant to provide information on their current partners, having doubts in confidentiality of information and being afraid of possible consequences.

Experience of displacement as a result of conflict. According to the Survey results, the first displacement movements started as early as January 2014 (i.e. before the active phase of the armed conflict in Donetsk and Lugansk regions). The last movements, reported by the respondents, took place in October 2015, just before the interview. However, the prevailing number of the interviewed IDPs (71.4 % of respondents) left their homes in June-October, 2014. Another 15 % of IDP respondents moved to new places in November 2014 – February, 2015.

A half of displaced women moved to the current place of residence at once, while 29.6 % of them changed several settlements during the displacement period; 28.5 % of IDP women also changed several places of residence in the same settlements. Only 4.5 % of IDP women returned home after displacement; unfortunately, the limited size of this population sample made any further analysis non-purposeful in terms of representativeness.

Table 2. Causes and circumstances, which forced displaced women to make a decision about displacement as a result of military conflict (N=1,007)

Causes and circumstances of displacement	Positive responses (multiple responses possible), %
Home (apartment) was completely or partially ruined	31.9
No (limited) access to drinking water	15.6
No food products available or food is too expensive	31.3
It was unsafe in a settlement (including direct military actions)	78.6
No electricity/water/gas supply	16.8
No access to medical assistance	24.9
No access to employment	37.3
No access to social benefits	37.2
No access to education (including for children)	17.5
No access to the needed medicine and treatments	22.4
Fear of prosecutions (due to political or religious reasons)	10.6
Impossibility to make business	4.9
No future for myself/family/children	29.3
Other	4.0

Source: author's calculations based on the 2015 UNFPA Survey.

As to causes and circumstances, which forced women to make a decision about displacement, more than three quarters of women told that it was unsafe in their home settlements, as direct military actions took place there (Table 2). As a result, about one-third of IDP women were deprived from safe housing (31.9 % of women informed that their homes were completely or partially ruined), from access to employment (37.3 % of the surveyed women) and access to social benefits (37.2 % of women). About one-third of IDP women reported that there was no food or available food items were too expensive. Almost 30 % of women told that they haven't seen any future for themselves or their families in given circumstances.

Socio-economic status at the labour market and income structure. The Survey design was also targeted at a study of socio-economic status of the surveyed population at the labour market (Table 3). As compared with IDPs, local women from hosting communities practically have not experienced any changes in their position at the labour market because of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Though a share of employed women has dropped by few percent points in the host communities (respectively, shares of unemployed women, women on maternity leaves and women, engaged into household work, have grown), this decline is rather insignificant in comparison with striking shifts observed in the structure of employment of displaced women. According to the Survey results, a share of employed women has declined almost twice among IDPs after their displacement (while 50 % of displaced women were employed before the conflict, only 27.1 % of them informed about this status at the moment of interview). At the same time, the share of unemployed IDP women has grown almost 6 times over this period (from 4 % before the conflict to 24 % at the moment of interview). The results of the Survey also confirmed the impact of displacement on opportunities of additional employment for women of the pension age and those women, who were receiving education (students and pupils).

Table 3. Socio-economic status at the labour market before the conflict and at the moment of interview, in %

Socio-economic status at the labour market	Local women, N=1,505		Displaced women, N=1,007	
	before the conflict	at the moment of interview	before the conflict	at the moment of interview
Employed	48.1	45.5	50.0	27.1
Unemployed, but actively looking for a job	2.7	3.7	4.0	24.0
Unemployed and NOT looking for a job	1.6	1.9	1.0	2.9
Pensioner (employed)	7.0	6.6	6.6	2.7
Pensioner (non-employed)	24.1	26.8	17.4	21.9
Receiving education (student, pupil) and employed	2.6	1.7	1.8	1.1
Receiving education (student, pupil) and non-employed	4.8	3.3	3.0	2.2
Non-employed due to incapacity to work	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.5
Engaged in homework	4.1	4.5	5.3	5.9
Stay on maternity leave	4.3	5.0	9.9	10.1
Other	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: author's calculations based on the 2015 UNFPA Survey.

Table 4. Composition of income by various sources and the main form of income at the moment of interview, in %

Income sources	Local women (N=1,505), of them:		Displaced women (N=1,007), of them:	
	have this source of income, %	have as the main income source, %	have this source of income, %	have as the main income source, %
Official wage at the main job	50.0	44.2	28.4	24.3
Awards and bonuses at the main job	8.0	1.5	5.9	1.5
Unofficial payments at the main job	3.3	0.8	2.1	0.5
Income from private business activity	2.2	0.9	2.0	0.8
Income from additional job(s)	5.2	1.1	9.6	1.4
Income from subsistence farming	6.4	1.3	1.7	0.2
Pension	34.0	27.3	28.8	24.8
Social benefits /social assistance	19.1	8.1	77.0	28.8
Financial support of other relatives (children, parents)	36.2	14.2	40.0	17.0
Income of savings, investments, securities, etc.	1.3	0.1	1.2	0.3
Income of rent payments	1.7	0.3	0.2	
Other	0.9	0.1	2.8	0.4

Source: author's calculations based on the 2015 UNFPA Survey.

The Survey results also revealed a very high dependency of displaced women on social benefits and cash allowances provided by the state (about three-fourths of IDPs received such incomes at the moment of interview, while 28.8 % of them informed that social benefits provide the main source of their incomes). As compared with local women from the host communities, IDPs were also more dependent on financial assistance from other family members: 40 % of the interviewed IDP women received support from relatives, while 17 % of them regarded this type of support as the main source of incomes (Table 4).

In contrast, official wages from the main job provided the main contribution in the income structure of local women (while 50 % of the interviewed women had such type of income; it was the main income source for 44 % of them). As to other disparities in the structures of incomes of two groups of the surveyed women, a larger share of incomes of additional jobs is common for IDP women. Such structure of incomes is determined not only by a smaller role of wages, but also by a need in more active search for additional incomes to provide the adequate living standards at a new place. On the other hand, the share of incomes from subsistence farming is several times smaller in the structure of IDP's incomes, as compared with women of local communities, mostly due to the lost opportunities to cultivate their land plots.

Access to public services. The Survey results have not revealed a significant exclusion of displaced women from the system of public service, as compared with local women (Table 5). The only notable disparity in responses on accessibility was traced for access to educational services: while two thirds of local women reported that it is easy for them to access education,

there were only 56.3% of displaced women providing such a response. That could reflect certain problems faced by displaced women, when trying to place their children in educational institutions, in particular in the system of preschool care.

At the same time, quite a large share of ALL women highlighted that it was difficult to access some service providers in their settlements. The largest shares of the surveyed women were unsatisfied with access to administrative services (30.7 % of respondents), free-of-charge medical assistance and receiving social benefits (by 28.4 % of respondents). Every fifth woman from local communities told that it is difficult for her to access social services, legal services, psychological assistance and medical service related to reproductive health. These results confirm a pressing need in the continuous development of a comprehensive system of socially important services in local communities to raise their accessibility for representatives of all population groups, including as permanent residents, as internally displaced people, staying in these host communities.

Conclusions. The Survey results obviously confirmed a high vulnerability of displaced persons in terms of employment and opportunities of income. Thus, systematic efforts should be taken to expand the opportunities of decent work for IDPs, while the efficiency of the state social support should be increased to address the most vulnerable categories of the

Table 5. Accessibility of various public services at the current place of settlement (distribution of responses to the question «Regarding your current place of settlement, is it difficult for you to utilize the following service?»)

Type of services and utilities	Local women, N=1,505			Displaced women, N=1,007		
	Difficult	Easy	Don't know	Difficult	Easy	Don't know
General free medical care	28.4	66.4	5.1	20.6	72.2	7.2
Reproductive health services and supplies like birth control and sanitary supplies	20.1	47.4	32.5	15.4	39.8	44.8
Police	16.7	58.2	25.0	11.2	60.2	28.6
Food	9.0	89.3	1.7	8.8	88.8	2.4
Supplies (other than food)	15.2	82.0	2.8	11.5	85.1	3.4
Education (including education for children)	15.9	67.0	17.1	11.8	56.3	28.9
Legal service/aid	20.7	51.4	27.8	14.8	56.3	28.9
Psychological assistance	21.1	44.5	34.4	14.0	54.9	31.1
Social service (social patronage, individual social services provided at home)	19.3	50.3	30.4	16.6	56.6	26.8
Receiving social benefits/subsidies, etc.	28.4	56.1	15.5	22.4	68.4	9.1
Public transport use	16.1	79.2	4.7	9.4	87.6	3.0
Administrative services (issue of certificates, personal documents, etc)	30.7	51.0	18.3	24.8	61.5	13.7

Source: author's calculations based on the 2015 UNFPA Survey.

population. Importantly, the immediate initiatives on support of IDPs are unable to provide a comprehensive response to prevent the falling living standards of IDPs. As the numbers of displaced people have been increasing, the pressure on local budgets, service providers and livelihoods has respectively grown, making grounds for increased tensions between IDPs and host communities. As a result, a drop in the quality of life is taking place in the country as a whole. Thus, an integrated approach to implementation of social policies on IDPs should be targeted at two main goals: 1) to solve the direct problems of displacement through immediate response to the current needs of displaced people, and 2) to facilitate their full-scale integration and adaptation into the host communities. As a whole, longstanding solutions are required, including actions on audit of all public dwellings available for long-term housing (abandoned houses in rural area, unfinished constructions, dormitories, etc.), regulation of the legislation base on the order to transfer housing to the IDPs for their durable use.

It is widely acknowledged that women are particularly vulnerable in displacement; they are also usually responsible for displaced children, elderly and disabled persons. At the same time, displaced women could face multiple discriminations in the host communities in terms of voice and representation, decision-making and access to economic opportunities. The traditional forms of gender-biased attitudes in a society and at the labour market could be combined with additional vulnerabilities, related to the health state, including the reproductive health needs, as well as prevalence of gender-based violence. Thus, incorporating of gender approach is important to address the specific needs of this category of displaced persons, enhancing their comprehensive access to the base public services, including education and preschool institutions for children, specific social service providers, sector of healthcare, in particular reproductive health programs. The increased pressure on the system of delivery of public services is naturally determining a need in the large-scale expanding of social infrastructure and safety networks.

While employment opportunities are of a particular importance for IDPs, including creation of new jobs, occupational counseling and skill improvement, the gender-sensitive analysis should be incorporated into expansion of the active labour market programs with regard to a high gender-based segregation in employment, common for Ukraine. The target support of women's business initiatives and start-up projects are of particular importance in terms of their empowerment in the host communities. Finally, it is important to empower women's participation in the peace-building and recovery processes to ensure consideration of gender equality principles in all developmental strategies.

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