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Photo: UN Women/Volodymyr Shuwayev

Forum on the Rights of Women with Disabilities, Kramatorsk, Donetsk region, 15 December 2017.

**LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND:
THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES**

GENDER ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT OF THE CITY OF KRAMATORSK, DONETSK OBLAST

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

December 2017

The Gender Accessibility Audit was conducted in partnership with Donetsk Civil-Military Administration, Kramatorsk City Council, the National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine and the Non-governmental Organization "People with Disabilities of Donetsk Oblast" during October-November 2017. This initiative was supported in the framework of the UNDP/ UN Women Joint Programme "Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine", funded by the European Union.

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UN WOMEN is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



What is the issue?

More than a billion people in the world today experience some form of disability. These people generally have poorer health, lower educational achievements, fewer economic opportunities and higher rates of poverty. This is largely due to the barriers they face in their everyday lives, rather than their disability. This disability is not only a public health issue, but also a human rights and development issue.

Women and girls with disabilities face barriers to full equality and advancement, and also experience multiple forms of discrimination based on their gender and their disabilities, which increases their vulnerability. Women with disabilities lack of full access to health, sexual and reproductive services, and are exposed to violence and gender-biased intra-household distribution of resources.¹ The **UN Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** and on the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, ratified by Ukraine in 1981 and 2010, address the intersectionality of gender and disability² and called upon Ukraine's government to take "special measures to eliminate such multiple forms of discrimination against women and their compounded negative impact,"³ and to ensure women and girls with disabilities have

equal opportunities and rights in all spheres of life. States parties may need to take specific temporary special measures to eliminate such multiple forms of discrimination against women and their compounded negative impact.

Leaving No One Behind - and reaching the furthest behind first - is the central promise of the 2030 Agenda. It means that the UN member states that signed up to achieving the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by 2030 commit to addressing inequalities and discrimination. They should also act to improve the circumstances of the poorest and most excluded women, including those facing marginalization and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The 2030 Agenda calls for particular attention to gender equality and the advancement of women and girls. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are also inclusive of persons with disabilities. Specific references to women and men, girls and boys with disabilities were made in the goals on education, employment, reducing inequalities, inclusive cities, and means of implementation and data collection. Ukraine has localized the SDGs, adopted its National Baseline Report (2017), and set national targets to achieve all of the sustainable development goals by 2030.

¹ UN Women, "Making SDGs Count for Women and Girls with Disabilities," Issue Brief, available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/6/issue-brief-making-the-sdgs-count-for-women-and-girls-with-disabilities>.

² The United Nations, 1979, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, Treaty Series 1249: 13, *General Recommendation #25*, available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006, A/RES/61/106, *General Recommendation #18* available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html>.

³ CEDAW General Recommendation #25, para 12.

International UN Volunteer Rupmani Chhetri shares her experience of facing multiple instances of discrimination as a woman with disabilities. Forum on the Rights of Women with Disabilities in Kramatorsk city.



Why a gender accessibility audit?

In Ukraine more than 2.6 million persons experience disability. The estimated number of persons with disabilities in the eastern conflict-affected oblasts is 372,000⁴, with 178,265 of them living in Donetsk oblast⁵. Due to internal displacement, the figures have been on the rise⁶. Most of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who because of the conflict fled their homes in eastern Ukraine still live in the region. An estimated 0.8 million IDPs reside permanently in the Government-Controlled Area⁷.

As Kramatorsk became the new oblast center, it now hosts most of the regional healthcare, social and administrative service-providing institutions. The internally displaced women and men with disabilities living in Donetsk Oblast depend on the health, social care and administrative services provided in the city of Kramatorsk.

The availability of valid, reliable and relevant disability data, disaggregated by sex, which is essential for evidence-informed local policymaking and service provision, remains limited. A lack of gender analysis of the disability,

The estimated number of persons with disabilities in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts is

372,000



178,265 of them living in Donetsk Oblast

the lack of understanding of the barriers, which women face in accessing public services, and the lack of engagement with gender- and disability-rights advocates, limit actions taken by the decision makers to address the challenges faced by women with disabilities in local planning and budgeting.

⁴ European Association of Service Providers for People with Disabilities, 2014, "Ukrainian Conflict: Priority Support Should be given to People with Disabilities," available at www.easpd.eu/en/content/ukrainian-conflict-priority-support-should-be-given-people-disabilities-0.

⁵ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2016.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ukraine Humanitarian Country Team, 2018, "Humanitarian Needs Overview," available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian_needs_overview_2018_en_20171130.pdf.

Aiming to address these shortcomings, UN Women, in partnership with the National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine, Donetsk Civil-Military Administration and Kramatorsk City Council conducted a Gender Accessibility Audit in 2017.

The Gender Accessibility Audit identified the architectural, infrastructure, information and communication barriers restricting the access of women

with disabilities to public services, and causing direct and indirect discrimination against them, their social isolation, marginalization and exclusion.

The Gender Accessibility Audit defines accessibility as the ability to access and equally benefit from public services, thus making possible the exercising of human rights, advancing the equality of all women and girls with the aim of leaving no one behind.



Iryna Tverdokhlib, Maryna Babets, Lesia Valiaeva and Anna Hrebenuik share their personal stories of the barriers they face as women with disabilities and as mothers of children with disabilities. Forum on the Rights of Women with Disabilities in Kramatorsk city.

Photo: UN Women/Volodymyr Shuvayev

The audited buildings included public institutions that provide services of priority for women with disabilities, or women who have children with disabilities in the city of Kramatorsk:

Children's Clinical Hospital

Obstetrical and gynaecological unit, City Hospital #1

Obstetrical and gynaecological consultation center, City Hospital #3

Outpatient clinic of the primary health care center of #2

Outpatient clinic #7 of the primary health center #1

Kindergarten #71

Department of labor and social protection

Territorial center for social services

Key findings of the gender accessibility audit

The results of the Audit confirmed that all eight buildings did not comply with international standards or the accessibility requirements of national legislation⁸.



No safe and accessible transportation is available in the city for women and men with physical disabilities to travel independently to access healthcare, social and educational facilities. Public transport stops and pedestrian crossings are not accessible and do not fully comply with state building norms. At most of the audited buildings, parking lots were either unavailable or have no special marking for the vehicles of women and men with disabilities;



Six out of eight of the audited buildings lack ramps at their entrances. The ramps that do exist have been installed incorrectly, and women with physical disabilities in wheelchairs cannot use them without help from another person;



Most of the buildings lack hand rails on the stairs. Stairs are not marked with special signs for women and men with visual impairments. Halls are not sufficiently lit;



Only two out of the eight audited buildings have elevators. However, even these are not accessible to women and men with physical disabilities in wheelchairs, preventing them from accessing the healthcare, educational and social services provided on the upper floors of the buildings. For example, as the social events in the Kindergarten #71 are conducted on the second floor, and there is no elevator in the building, mothers with disabilities (e.g. users of wheelchairs) experience physical barriers to attending parents' meetings in the kindergarten;



In none of the audited buildings were toilets accessible for women with disabilities. In the case of Primary Health Centre #7's outpatient clinic, the toilet is located outside the building and was not accessible due its being in a poor condition;

⁸ Ministry of Construction, Architecture, Housing and Communal Services, 2 November 2006, "Buildings and structures. Accessibility of houses and buildings for people with limited mobility," State Building Norms on #B.2.2-17:2006, adopted by the Decree #362.



Healthcare facilities lack specific equipment to examine women with physical disabilities, making examinations, such as X-Rays, mammograms, gynaecological examination beds, and obstetric and oncological consultation services inaccessible for women with disabilities. Only Obstetrical and Gynaecological Unit of City Hospital #1 has some facilities geared to the needs of women with disabilities – a special gynaecological armchair, a ramp at the entrance and an examination room located on the ground floor;



Medical facilities don't provide assistants for women with disabilities if they have children with them while visiting the facility;



None of the medical personnel of the audited facilities have been trained to provide non-discriminatory equal treatment to women with disabilities, or to provide special assistance during examinations or treatment;



Kindergarten staff have not been trained in inclusive education, and have no experience or knowledge of providing an accessible environment for girls and boys with disabilities⁹ ;



None of the audited facilities provide equal access to information for women and men with visual impairments, and do not use accessible formats such as Braille or text in large fonts. No facilities provide sign language interpreters for women and men with hearing impairments.



All of the interviewed staff in healthcare, social protection and pre-school education facilities demonstrated high motivation and commitment to raise their awareness on the issues related to providing services to women with disabilities, accessibility, non-discrimination, and inclusive education. The willingness of staff to obtain new skills and knowledge provides a great opportunity to promote inclusive and non-discriminatory services for women with disabilities.

In summary, the Gender Accessibility Audit identified and documented:

Significant physical barriers in all eight audited public buildings that provide services of priority for women with disabilities

Limited or no awareness among local service providers about the needs of women with disabilities, national legislation and standards;

A lack of accessible information and channels of communication for women with disabilities;

Limited or absent access for women with physical and sensory impairments to public transport, buildings, services, and information, that restricts exercising their basic human rights and equal opportunities, and contributes to marginalization and vulnerability.

⁹ In 2017, the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, signed the law "On Amendments to the Law 'On Education' on Features of Access of Persons with Special Educational Needs to Educational Services."



Women and men with disabilities proudly present the results of the Gender Accessibility Audit of Kramatorsk city to local authorities and representatives of eight donor organizations (including the European Union, which funded the initiative).

Photo: UNDP Ukraine/Artem Getman

How are the gender accessibility audit findings used?

The audit findings informed Kramatorsk city development programmes and the city budget for 2018.

Towards 2018 annual planning and budgeting the Kramatorsk municipal authorities discussed the audit's findings with women and men with disabilities. They jointly identified practical measures and steps that should be implemented in 2018 through Kramatorsk's city plan, programs and budget, which will address the identified specific needs and priorities of women and girls with disabilities in the city of Kramatorsk and in Donetsk Oblast.

Twenty-four women and ten men with disabilities developed an advocacy strategy to promote the implementation of the Gender Accessibility Audit recommendations:

1. Purchase accessible buses. Set up “on demand” public bus stops near healthcare, social protection, and education facilities;
2. Provide specific equipment required for examinations, including gynecological ones, for women with disabilities in five of the audited healthcare facilities;
3. Conduct training of public servants in non-discrimination, accessibility and inclusive policies; train medical staff on issues of disability, the rights of women and men with disabilities, and giving assistance and support to women with disabilities, and training the staff of administration and educational facilities in inclusive education;
4. Develop, produce and distribute accessible information materials for women and men with visual impairments in the City Council, and in healthcare, social, and education facilities. Ensure the accessibility of the websites of Kramatorsk City Council, and of healthcare, social protection and education facilities;
5. Ensure that a sign language interpreter is available at healthcare, social and education facilities;
6. Ensure that local budget funds are allocated for the implementation of accessibility measures, such as physical accessibility, specialized equipment and services, and information and communication in the medical, social and educational spheres. Ensure there is monitoring of the implementation of these measures by representatives of the Kramatorsk Accessibility Committee;
7. Integrate the Gender Accessibility Audit findings and recommendations in the 2018 city budget and local programs, and assign responsibility to respective units in the City Council for their timely implementation. Provide information about the adopted programs and budgets to civil society, including women and men with disabilities.



During the training, women and men with disabilities develop an advocacy strategy to promote implementing the Gender Accessibility Audit recommendations in Kramatorsk city.

Photo: Donbass Professional Rehabilitation Center for People with Disabilities/Angelina Skachko

Why is a gender accessibility audit important?

We hope that the results of the Gender Accessibility Audit and the social mobilization of various parts of Ukrainian society around the intersectionality between gender and disability will contribute to **strengthening national systems and processes of accountability**. The accountability principle is important, as it entails improving the effectiveness of institutions and mechanisms to track progress made in empowering those who have been left behind, or who are at risk of falling behind.

We also hope that our work on **building human rights awareness** among women and men from various groups beyond persons with disabilities will strengthen the demand side of accountability. We are investing in the capacities of women and men with disabilities to generate evidence, making assessments and analysis of their needs so that they can claim their rights effectively in the course of decentralization reform. Their partnership with Kramatorsk City Council and Donetsk Civil-Military Administration in performing the audit and municipal planning was very promising. We hope other communities will be inspired to follow their example. Often, women with disabilities are invisible, both among those promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, and those promoting gender equality

and the advancement of women. UN Women is proud that women with disabilities in Kramatorsk and Donetsk Oblast and the National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine played a central role in performing the Gender Accessibility Audit. Empowerment is the strategy and approach we apply in our work, and we can see that it is working! We were also happy to partner with many committed gender-equality, disability and human-rights advocates, the women leaders of Donetsk Civil-Military Administration, Kramatorsk City Council deputies, the staff of the City Council and many other women and men who are striving to make Ukraine a country of equal rights and opportunities for all and to leave no one behind.

UN Women Ukraine is privileged to cooperate with committed and passionate women and men with disabilities who believe that change is possible. We express our sincere gratitude to our partners from Donetsk Civil-Military Administration, Kramatorsk City Council, the National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine and the Non-governmental Organization "People with Disabilities of Donetsk Oblast". Without their significant contribution and cooperation, it would not have been possible to carry out the Gender Accessibility Audit.

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