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GENDER-SENSITIVE RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:

20 RECOMMENDATIONS

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Authors: Lorina Fedorova, Tamara Khurtsydze, Ivan Verbytskyi
Project manager: Maryana Kuzemska
Reviewer: Olena Strelnyk
Translator: Roksolana Mashkova
Designer: Yana Vyniarska
Illustrations: seri/graph studio

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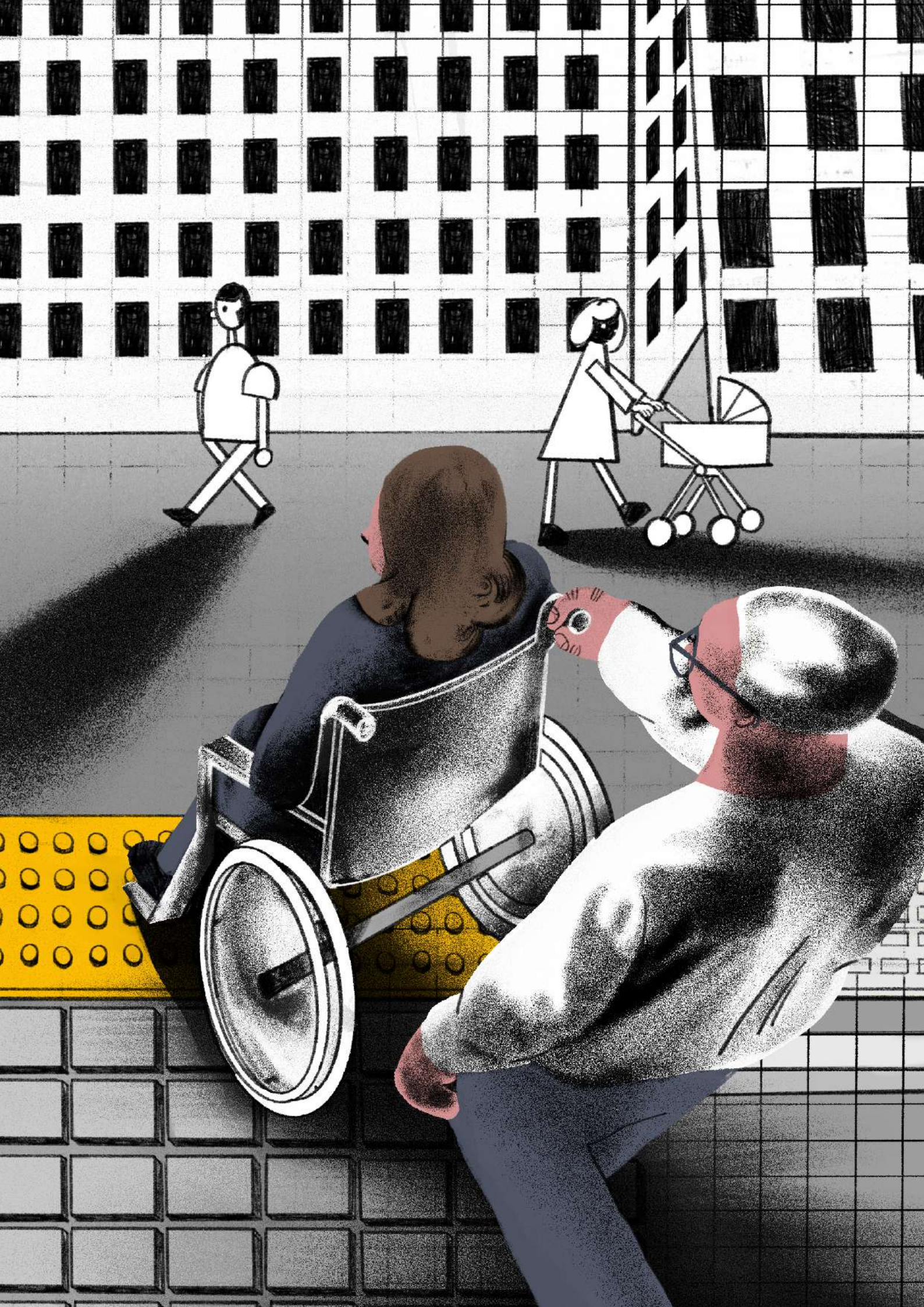
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Contents

Introduction	5
Governance	9
Budgeting	17
Security	23
Social protection	31
Mobility	37
Leisure	43
Conclusions	47
Recommendations	49
Further reading	54



Introduction

Defending dignity and ensuring the right to a dignified life for everyone were among the key demands of the Revolution of Dignity which took place in Ukraine in 2013–2014. When this social movement won, the country accelerated its reforms and European integration, while Russia launched a war against Ukraine in an attempt to interfere with these processes.

In order to coordinate international support for the reforms, the Ukrainian Government and its partners began to hold annual Ukraine Reform Conferences in 2017. After the beginning of the **full-scale Russian invasion in 2022**, these events continued to be held annually under a new title, as Ukraine Recovery Conferences. The large-scale destruction and the negative impact of the war added issues of rebuilding physical infrastructure destroyed by the hostilities to the agenda of public policy reforms.

During the first recovery conference in Switzerland on 4–5 July 2022, the participating countries adopted an outcome document titled the Lugano Declaration. It defined the seven guiding principles of the process of Ukraine’s recovery. One of these principles is gender equality and inclusion. The detailed formulation of this principle is as follows:

“The recovery process has to be inclusive and ensure gender equality and respect for human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. Recovery needs to benefit all, and no part of society should be left behind. Disparities need to be reduced.”¹

Ukrainian government instructions define **gender-sensitive approach** as “taking into account specific social, cultural, economic, political, and other characteristics of the conditions of life and the needs of women and men.”² We base our analysis on the premise that a gender-sensitive approach involves taking into account the needs and interests

1 URC (2022). **Outcome Document of the Ukraine Recovery Conference**.

2 Ministry of Social Policy (2020). **Instructions on the integration of gender approaches while developing legislative acts and regulations** [Ukrainian].

of all social groups, not only those that have the best access to power and resources. Men with above-average income have historically been the most privileged group in society which was the most involved in decision making. In view of this, the personal life experience of members of this group in particular has been affecting decisions the most and has been perceived as the default option, an example of an ordinary person.

Gender-sensitive approach is about identifying and taking into account varying experiences of diverse social groups, which can differ. This is not just about social groups that differ by gender, but also by age, financial situation, background, sexual orientation, health condition, disability and other characteristics, as well as a combination of these. Depending on the characteristic, each individual may belong to categories whose experiences were taken into account more often as well as to the categories which have traditionally been overlooked. Moreover, throughout one's life, depending on various, sometimes unpredictable events, each individual can change their social status. Consideration of various combinations of privilege and discrimination which are produced by intersections of multiple group and individual identities is the basis of **intersectionality**, which is part of the gender-sensitive approach.

Teenage boys from low-income households; single mothers whose partners have been killed at war; homosexual men over 60; women with disabilities living in rural areas – different problems and public policy issues can be relevant for each of these (and other) social groups. Due to existing limitations, not all of them can be solved at once; moreover, sometimes the interests of different social groups can contradict one another. The gender-sensitive approach involves paying special attention and **prioritizing the needs of less privileged social groups** who have historically received less consideration in decision making.

Applying the gender-sensitive approach in the recovery process can bring gender equality and inclusion closer in Ukrainian society, particularly at the local level. Taking into account the needs of diverse social groups is an important step required for the practical implementation of the “no-one left behind” principle and the achievement of social justice.

Full **recovery** and rebuilding of Ukraine is not possible without victory in the war and the establishment of sustainable and fair peace.³

3 Andrushkiv, A., Pankevych, B., Pekar, V., Horbach, V., Hopko, H., Shulha, D., ...Hrytsak, Y. (2023). **Sustainable Peace Manifesto**.

Nevertheless, the recovery process has already begun and is underway. Roofs and windows are repaired in damaged buildings, evacuated universities continue their studies, internally displaced people find housing and jobs, new institutions and businesses open, the country continues to work. However, in addition to direct harm and damages, the war has also exacerbated the challenges which the government and hromadas faced even before the war, particularly understaffing and underfunding, the difficulty of prioritizing sustainable and systematic solutions before cheap and quick fixes, distrust and insufficient capacity. In view of this, we assume that recovery is a lengthy and complex process which is inextricably linked to the country's general development, reforms, and European integration. It requires not only compensation or rebuilding of whatever has been destroyed or lost, but also a systemic update, adaptation of the country to the new conditions, opportunities, and challenges.

This document has been prepared for the Ukraine Recovery Conference 2024 in Berlin in order to suggest recommendations regarding the implementation of the principle of gender equality and inclusion in the recovery and development processes **at the local level**. It considers both public policies and specific practical solutions in six fields: governance, budgeting, security, social protection, mobility, and leisure. These fields have been selected due to the fact that governance and budgeting are key for the implementation of any public policy, security and social protection have become especially relevant as a result of the war, and mobility and leisure are the basis of the local government's field of responsibility. In addition, the contexts and solutions for these fields are sometimes so interrelated that boundaries between them are rather blurred.

While preparing this document, we have analyzed the existing literature and previous development and conducted 10 expert interviews with professionals working in the 6 fields in question at the national and local levels. For each field, we offer an overview of context with examples, recommendations on practical solutions in the short- and long-term perspective, as well as links to further reading materials. The suggested recommendations will be of use to the hromadas that have been affected by the war to different degrees: both those that need to fully rebuild their infrastructure and restore their government bodies and those where the main challenge is to adapt to new conditions. In each of these cases, gender sensitivity can and should be taken into account during the processes of recovery and development in order to ensure their inclusivity and fairness.



Governance

Achieving equal rights and opportunities at the local level is impossible without including the gender approach into governance practices and the policies of local self-government bodies. In this, the gender approach goes beyond simply balanced representation of men and women in the structure of government bodies and local councils; it also involves applying gender-sensitive governance practices, reforming the existing and introducing special policies and programmes.

Gender-oriented governance is the process of decision making and implementation at all levels of governance, which includes measures, attitudes and practices of various stakeholders for the purpose of ensuring gender equality and social justice.⁴

In 2022, the Ministry of Social Policy approved the Methodological Recommendations on the Implementation of the Gender Approach, which present the mechanisms for ensuring equal rights and opportunities in territorial hromadas. The presented mechanisms can be categorized into analytical products, governance solutions and bodies, as well as practices of gender-sensitive public services.⁵

One of the first analytical steps within the gender approach is **collection of gender** statistics (or gender-sensitive data). These are data that clearly reflect inequalities in the conditions and opportunities of men and women in various fields of life. Gender statistics reflect the distribution by sex and other social characteristics, such as age, family status, disability and its forms, etc. At the level of hromadas, various government bodies and institutions collect statistics and data, some of which may already include distribution by sex or other social characteristics. An important step is to establish a system of all data collection with consideration for the gender component and to synchronize statistical information between different structural units and institutions in the community.

4 Ivanina, T., Kyseliova, O. & Kolodiy, M. (2021). **Gender-oriented governance: Practical guidelines** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv, Yuston Publishing and Printing Company.

5 Ministry of Social Policy (2022). **Methodological recommendations on the implementation of the gender and human-rights-based approach at the level of territorial hromadas** [Ukrainian].

Gender data collection is often done at preparatory stages as part of broader gender-oriented governance initiatives, because the implementation of other instruments can be complicated or poorly justified without consistent data collection. The more closely a hromada works with data, the better they understand where money should be directed and which measures should be funded. The highest effectiveness is shown by regular collection of gender-sensitive data, because this permits for comparing the data and demonstrating the dynamics of change. However, the process of data collection has become more complex as a result of the decentralization reform: the administrative borders of hromadas have changed after merging, so it has become more difficult to use the data collected before merging. Today, the challenges of data collection have also been exacerbated by the full-scale invasion and forced displacement within the country and abroad.

In addition to collecting gender-sensitive data, composing a **gender profile** of a territorial hromada allows it to describe in detail the needs of various population groups in the hromada and to develop recommendations on how to improve the provision of the public services which meet these needs.

In practice, hromadas can develop similar analytical documents under different titles. For instance, these can include social passports, gender passports, community passports, etc. In this case, it is useful to unify the already-collected data about hromada residents into a single analytical product which presents these data and the dynamics of change in a comprehensive way and with as much detail as possible.

● **EXAMPLE:** Gender statistics collection in the Apostolove Hromada

The Apostolove Territorial Hromada in the Dnipropetrovsk Region has developed a hromada gender profile in order to gain a better understanding of their residents and make decisions based on their needs. A significant part of the document is dedicated to the presentation of gender-sensitive data in the fields of health care, education, sports, culture, social protection, and urban development. It takes into account not only the gender distribution, but also age and location of residence with regard to urban or rural populations. The document also considers gender gaps at the level of representation of men and women in the field of political decision making.⁶

6 (2020). [Gender profile of the Apostolove Urban United Territorial Hromada](#) [Ukrainian].

Another instrument of the implementation of gender-oriented governance is **gender analysis**. It helps record gender gaps, take gender aspects into account in various fields of work, and include the gender component in local budget programmes, projects, policies, or the development of a hromada's strategic documents. Gender analysis can be conducted at any stage of implementation of a policy, programme, or document, but it is the most effective at the preparatory stage or during monitoring and evaluation.

● **EXAMPLE: Gender analysis of the city's energy and climate policy in Zhytomyr**

The Zhytomyr City Council, in collaboration with a non-governmental organization, conducted a gender analysis of the city's energy and climate policy and developed a gender portrait.⁷ In it, the team analyzed the composition of the people in charge of the development and implementation of the energy and climate policy in the City Council; in particular, they determined the gender and age distribution as well as the work experience of the relevant specialists in the Zhytomyr City Council and municipal institutions in the fields of culture, education, health care, and associations of co-owners of apartment buildings. While working on the gender analysis, the experts discovered gender imbalances in the city's targeted programs in the fields of energy policy, transportation, solid household waste treatment, etc.⁸ They also projected the consequences of the implementation of the reviewed measures and programs from the gender impact perspective and provided recommendations regarding the opportunities to include the gender component into the city's energy and climate policies.

Gender-oriented governance may also involve the introduction of positions or bodies in the local government structure that would be responsible for ensuring gender equality at the local level. At the hromada level, such institutions may include:

- **Authorized representative (coordinator) on gender policy issues** is an official whose duties include ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women, preventing gender discrimination

7 Ostapchuk, O. & Tarasenko, N. **Gender portrait of those responsible for the energy and climate policies of the Zhytomyr Urban Territorial Community** [Ukrainian].

8 Ibid.

and gender-based violence, general coordination of projects and programs whose goal is to ensure gender equality in their hromada. The authorized representative can be a dedicated position or be represented at the level of a deputy head of the hromada.

- **Consultative and advisory bodies** are formal groups created for the purpose of jointly working on the issues of ensuring equal rights and opportunities. They can also exist in the format of a working group, coordination, expert, or public council. Members of these bodies can include specialists from local government agencies, councilors, gender policy specialists, active residents, civil associations, non-governmental organizations, etc. Consultative and advisory bodies can be created for various issues related to the inclusivity of local governance; examples include accessibility councils, councils of internally displaced persons, etc.
- **Councilor groups on gender issues** are associations of councilors around issues of gender equality. The work of such groups can involve advocacy for political decisions, initiation of projects, and adaptation of international and national gender legislation for the local level.⁹

It is important to take into account that local government officials may be experiencing excessive workload with their core official duties. To make these governance solutions effective, their work should not be treated as a formality. Local governments should also take into account the existing workloads of the officials appointed as responsible for these issues and make sure that they have the capacity to do the additional work.

An important requirement for the implementation of gender equality in governance is the representation of women and members of various social groups (such as ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+) in leadership positions and in elected bodies. For instance, the Election Code of Ukraine provides for **gender quotas** in political party lists at the level of 40%, which came into force for local elections starting in 2020.

In addition to elected offices, it is also important to appoint women and members of various social groups to positions in executive bodies, with special attention paid to fields related to significant resources, in which women have been historically underrepresented, such as the construction industry. It is necessary to ensure decent conditions

⁹ Ivanina, T., Kyseliova, O. & Kolodiy, M. (2021). **Gender-oriented governance: Practical guidelines** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv, Yuston Publishing and Printing Company.

and remuneration in public service in order to encourage people without sufficient savings, passive income, or informal or unethical ways of parallel earning to work as public servants.

Involving residents in decision making is another instrument of promoting gender equality and inclusion. Special attention must be paid to involving and taking into account the needs of those who will be affected by the corresponding decisions. People who belong to vulnerable social groups may have less access to information about relevant political processes and less free time or particular technical expertise regarding various issues, so involving them requires particular effort, including additional informing and consideration of their needs in the design of participatory processes. Important steps towards the consideration of the needs of vulnerable groups can include involving organizations which represent the interests or provide services to these groups in decision making; these can be feminist and LGBTQIA+ organizations, organizations of indigenous peoples and people with disabilities, organizations that provide humanitarian aid. In the context of recovery, it is important to involve people from vulnerable social groups as well as organizations that represent their interests in the decision making and planning with regard to recovery.

A useful practice is to engage outside specialists in gender policy issues who can provide expertise and consulting services. Involving outside experts can be appropriate during the collection and analysis of gender statistics, development of analytical materials such as a gender profile, or for consultations regarding the inclusion of the gender component in local policies, etc. Engaging an external party helps shape a new perspective on the local context and obtain professional advice that will help improve gender-sensitive governance.

● **EXAMPLE:** Gender-sensitive governance in the Pokrovske Hromada

One example of complex implementation of the instruments of gender-oriented governance is the Pokrovske Community of the Dnipropetrovsk Region.¹⁰ In 2019, the Town Council appointed its Authorized Representative for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men.¹¹ Before making the decision,

10 Pokrovske Village Council (2021). **Gender Policy** [Ukrainian].

11 Pokrovske Village Council. **Appointment of the Commissioner** (Coordinator) for issues of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the Pokrovske Village Council (with the development of the relevant Regulations) [Ukrainian].

the hromada studied the experience of the work of authorized representatives at the regional level and adapted their official duties to the local level. In particular, the duties of the Authorized Representative in the Pokrovske Hromada include receiving citizens regarding requests for resolving gender discrimination, conducting educational events for council employees, informing residents about ensuring equal rights and opportunities.¹² In addition, the Pokrovske Community has adopted an Action Plan to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, which is to be reviewed on a regular basis.

An important aspect in gender-oriented governance is not only the application of specific instruments within the structure of government bodies but also the reforming of the practices of interaction with hromada residents. Gender sensitivity in **public service provision** aims to ensure equal access for men and women to services provided by local government bodies and to prevent gender imbalance in meeting the needs of different population groups.

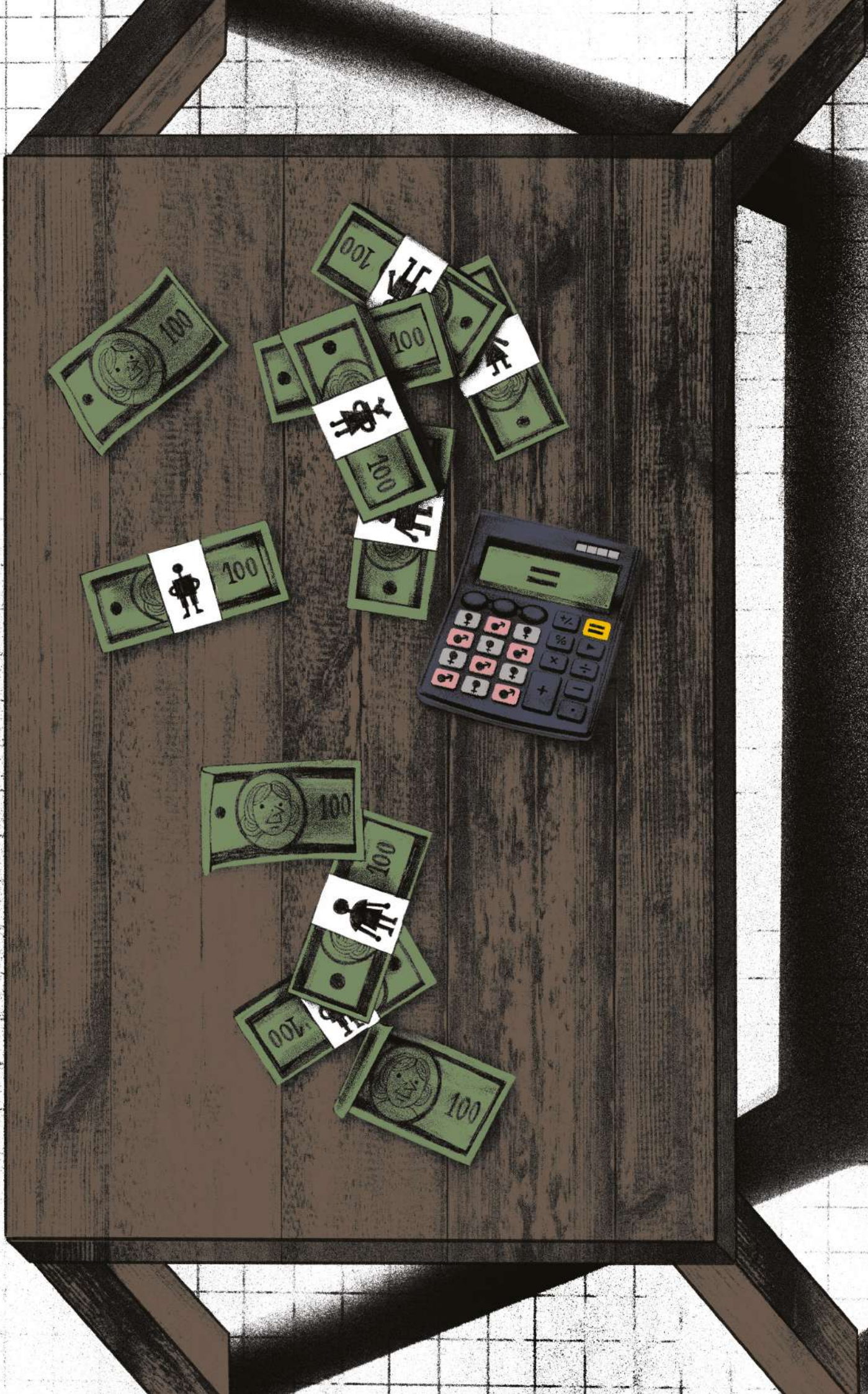
Gender sensitivity can primarily manifest at the level of organization and principles of operation of the spaces in public and administrative buildings and institutions. For example, it is important to plan the working schedule of the specialists in administrative service provision centers, social protection departments and other institutions in a way that would enable them to receive residents with different needs and opportunities, such as full-time employees, the unemployed, or parents with varying daily routines. **Public and administrative buildings** and **spaces** for receiving visitors should be organized in accordance with accessibility principles to make sure that people with disabilities, people with baby strollers or other groups with limited mobility can access administrative and social services without obstacles. This includes the arrangement of barrier-free entrances, passages and doors, bathrooms, waiting areas. Another important aspect of organizing a gender-sensitive space is providing children's areas and seats, gender-neutral bathrooms, and changing tables that are accessible to people with different gender identities, fathers and mothers who take care of babies.¹³

12 Pokrovske Village Council (2019). **Decision on the approval of the Regulations** about the Commissioner (Coordinator) of the Pokrovske Village Council for issues of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men [Ukrainian].

13 Radnyk. **Implementation of the principles of gender equality in the provision of administrative and social services** [Ukrainian].

Another crucial principle is the physical and informational accessibility of public services. This includes using services both in-person and online by all hromada residents and guarantees of accessibility of public services to groups with limited mobility. This principle can be implemented, for example, through mobile administrative service provision centers or through social transportation services (“social taxis”). A separate aspect of gender sensitivity in public services is communication with service recipients, particularly gender-sensitive language (including the absence of sexism and the use of feminine forms) as well as the use of correct terminology and polite communication.

For events aimed to involve residents in decision making, local governments should also plan the time and location of the events in a way that various groups of people can attend them. For example, people with office working hours will often be unable to attend an event before 6 p.m., while people from other localities have more difficulties with traveling to the event location if a discussion is held in the hromada center. The premises where engagement events are held should be chosen with regard to the recommendations on inclusivity, particularly the ones described above. Access to a bomb shelter is required in case there is an air raid siren. In regions close to the confrontation line, it is advisable to have a room for public events which are arranged directly in bomb shelters. It is also important to use varied channels for informing people about public events, prioritizing the channels used by the target groups – for example, by combining online informing with physical announcements in public spaces or residential areas. While planning citizen engagement, the organizers should take into account the needs and capabilities of different people, particularly plan for different formats of participation, both offline and online, because either of them separately can be inaccessible for some of the people due to their displacement as a result of the war, interrupted power supply or connection, or insufficient level of computer literacy.



Budgeting

Gender-sensitive approaches to governance include a number of aspects related to the distribution of public resources, particularly financial resources. Budget funding management can be ineffective, and as a result certain needs are not considered or considered unfairly. In the conditions of the full-scale invasion, reviewing the system of distribution of spending becomes especially relevant, because in addition to changing budget revenue, the very composition of hromada residents has changed. Since February 2022, hromadas are receiving internally displaced people, veterans, military members whose needs and interests may be different and special. Thus, this should be taken into account in budgeting processes.

The practice of including gender sensitivity into budgeting is known as gender-oriented budgeting.

Gender-oriented budgeting (GOB) is the practice of taking gender aspects into account at all stages of the budgeting process and covering the targets of achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the relevant budget documents.¹⁴ Gender aspects are defined here as the combination of cultural, social, political, historical and other characteristics of men and women. The gender approach in budgeting helps to reveal and meet different needs of a large number of population groups.

Since 2019, gender-oriented budgeting has been officially established at the national level by the Methodological Recommendations from the Ukrainian Ministry of Finances.¹⁵ These recommendations can be applied while planning, executing, and reporting on budget funds both at the central and at the local levels.

14 Ivanina, T., Kyseliova, O., Kolodiy, M., Ostapchuk, O. & Tsiupa, O. (2020). **Gender-oriented approach in the budget process: Practical guide** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv, Vivario.

15 Ministry of Finances of Ukraine (2019). **Methodological recommendations on the implementation and application of the gender-oriented approach in the budget process** [Ukrainian].

Gender-oriented budgeting is not a separate practice in the budget process; rather, it is a cross-cutting approach that can be integrated at all stages of the budgeting process. Introducing GOB brings a number of advantages to hromadas. Budget planning with a gender-sensitive approach allows hromadas to be more effective in managing budget funds, to focus on solving problems that are relevant for different groups, and empower vulnerable population groups in different fields. In addition to the actual promotion of the goals of gender equality, gender-oriented budgeting can also facilitate greater resident involvement at the hromada level and improves the accountability and transparency of the budgeting process.

In order to integrate all budget programs and funding measures into a unified approach which prioritizes the realization of human rights, the instrument of gender analysis is used. The methods of conducting a gender budget analysis seek to reveal the budgeting spheres which require the inclusion of a gender aspect and develop recommendations on how exactly these programs can achieve the goals of gender equality and inclusion. In addition, gender analysis highlights the impact of local programmes and measures on different population groups, which means that data with gender distribution and other social characteristics at the hromada level are required to properly conduct the analysis.

● Example of gender-oriented budgeting

The gender budget initiative calculated that for the city of Lutsk, the annual cost of prenatal care was only 65,000 UAH (as of 2013). Meanwhile, the annual budget for the maintenance of general boarding schools and other institutions for children with physical or mental developmental disabilities was 1,930,242 UAH. The initiative group supposed that a rational solution of this problem would be to direct funding to prenatal care that would help avoid developmental disabilities and reduce the budget burden of the maintenance of specialized institutions in the future. Therefore, the group submitted a suggestion to include the provision of medications to pregnant women into the Programme for Preventing Iodine Deficit among the Population of Lutsk in 2013–2015. The Financial Department of the Lutsk City Council did not approve the draft program with the explanation of the “lack of funding in the city budget.”

Even though the city government did not accept the suggested funding measures in the program, the gender budget initiative still produced positive consequences. In this case, GOB involved a broad information campaign for the hromada population at

the preparatory stages of program implementation, which improved residents' awareness of the need for iodine supplementation.¹⁶

If a locality or hromada has at least one person in need of a certain service, the local government must find a way to provide it to them. At the same time, the issue of funding such services used by relatively few people is complex. This especially applies to small communities whose revenue does not allow them to properly cover all the potential services which their residents may need. An example of solving this problem in the field of education is the optimization of the school network: the development of hub schools which can provide high-quality education and the organization of transportation to them instead of maintaining the operation of low-enrollment schools. A solution for other fields can be provided by cooperation between communities, when they unite and co-fund certain services.

● **EXAMPLE:** Intermunicipal partnerships as a part of optimizing the budgeting process

The Shcherbani Hromada of the Poltava Region has a Social Service Provision Center whose services can also be used by residents of the Machukhy Hromada and the Kolomatske Hromada. These hromadas all assign funding together to maintain the center and to pay salaries to its together.¹⁷

The instruments of implementation of gender-oriented budgeting can differ. For example, they can include the adoption of a gender-sensitive budget programme which aims to support a specific vulnerable group. However, a significant share of events implemented at the local level promote gender equality to different extents but are not presented as gender-oriented budgeting. Some budget programs provide support to different population groups in one way or another, but they do not contain a gender component in their financial indicators and justifications.

16 Ivanina, T., Zhukova, O., Yevchenko, S., ...Yarosh, O. (2016). **Gender-oriented budgeting in Ukraine: Theory and practice: Methodological guide** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv, IE Klymenko.

17 Suspilne Poltava (February 17, 2024). **One of Poltava Region's hromadas has a social center where people recover from illnesses: How to apply** [Ukrainian].

An important role in the GOB cycle is played by the stage of **monitoring and assessment**. The monitoring of programs and budgets is conducted to evaluate the impact of local programs and policies on ensuring gender equality.¹⁸ It can be conducted both by public observers and by local government specialists; what is important is to ensure accountability, transparency, and a systematic approach to the monitoring process. The findings of the monitoring allow hromadas to improve their governance decisions while planning the budgeting process and the future budget programs.

In addition, monitoring helps track changes in the needs and sentiments of hromada residents. In order to make sure that the provided services remain relevant, it is worth systematically researching the needs and verifying whether the funded services and measures remain pertinent. Needs can be researched using surveys, consultations with residents, and other participatory measures. It is important to maintain the impartiality of the researchers and be prepared that some of the services or measures may have to be changed or reformed.

● **EXAMPLE:** Changes in the funding of extracurricular education institutions

A significant challenge in the work of communal extracurricular education institutions is the low number of students attending the classes. One of the causes is that these classes do not correspond to the children's current interests. The older the child, the less they attend communal clubs and extracurricular classes. In order to keep the children interested, communal institutions can work on updating their program. Changes in the program and list of classes do not necessarily mean increased costs for these institutions; they can involve changes in teaching more modern techniques and methods within the existing classes.

One example of conducting an assessment of needs for extracurricular education institutions is the Shyrokye Hromada in the Mykolayiv Region. Their working group conducted a survey among school students to find out their inclinations, wishes and needs with regard to attending clubs and extracurricular classes

18 NGO Bureau for Gender Strategies and Budgeting (2022). **Gender monitoring** of local programs and budgets: step by step. Guide for public monitoring groups (public observers) [Ukrainian].

in the hromada. In the survey, the students had an opportunity to share their ideas on how to improve the existing classes and express their motivations for attending or not attending the classes. In addition, the survey results showed that the selection of clubs and classes in the community was too narrow, and that 1/5 of the surveyed respondents attended the classes because of their parents' wishes.¹⁹

19 Sviderska, N., Dmytruk, N., Yerko, H. and Dzherdzh, S. (2019). **Gender analysis practices in hromadas: Practical guide** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv.



Security

In wartime, the most relevant and important issues for ensuring every individual's personal security are those pertaining to national security. They are the factors that determine the escalation or de-escalation of hostilities, the establishment of occupation or fair peace and the rule of law. Matters of national security primarily fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the central government, while the involvement of local self-government is limited. Despite this, local governments can perform the functions of facilitating mobilization, helping the armed forces, or participating in the building of fortifications, the material and technical provision for the troops.

The war has drawn more attention to security issues, including at the hromada level. This makes it especially important to consider various options for security policies and the proper preparation of the corresponding decisions. A key focus in this field is civil defense, particularly the arrangement of bomb shelters. Nevertheless, this aspect of security is not the only one on the agenda of hromadas. **Human security** is also an issue that needs to be dealt with at the local level. It is an approach to security which involves identifying and solving widespread and pervasive challenges for the preservation of human lives, livelihoods, and dignity.²⁰

In order to measure security and plan security policies, we categorize security into **perceived and actual security**. Perceived security is how safe people feel. Factors such as gender, age, appearance, or belonging to vulnerable social groups, such as LGBTQIA+ people or ethnic minorities, affect how safe and free one can feel in certain spaces depending on the time of day, which can result in self-restrictions in terms of one's appearance and behavior. Actual security is a more complex concept. In a narrow sense, it means a lack of crime and direct and immediate threats. In a broader sense, it can also include the economic aspect, health care, environmental protection, etc.²¹ Similarly to perceived security, people who belong to vulnerable social

20 United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. [What is Human Security?](#)

21 Bahlai, S., Bobrova, A., Herasym, H., Kazdobina, J., Kormych, B., Maliarenko, T. & Monastyrskyi, Y. (2021). [Human Security: Specifics and Opportunities for Ukraine](#). Kyiv.

groups are more likely to be targeted by violence or crime, including police brutality. A key indicator of security can be the ability of certain social groups to hold mass events in public spaces, such as prides and marches for equality for LGBTQIA+ people.

Decisions on community security should be made with consideration for the opinions and experiences of different hromada residents. In addition to public discussions, data on security is also required to make evidence-based decisions. Measuring perceived security is relatively simpler: it involves surveys on how people feel in various spaces. As for actual security, institutional registered crime indicators can be used. There is, however, undetected crime which does not end up in police statistics. Official statistics do not take into account many crimes and misdemeanors either because the police do not initiate proceedings in order to avoid spoiling their crime clearance records or to reduce the amount of red tape, or because the victims do not always report the crimes to the police – for instance, due to a lack of trust, which can be particularly relevant for vulnerable social groups.²²

To obtain more valid data, **victimology surveys** need to be conducted either at the national or at the local level. These surveys include questions about whether people have personally encountered crime recently, and they help determine the level of undetected crime, particularly sexualized and physical violence, robberies, etc. It is important that these surveys allow for taking into account the experiences of diverse social groups by gender, age, or belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community, internally displaced people, or the Roma community. As of yet, Ukraine does not practice regular victimology surveys.

● **EXAMPLE:** Victimology survey

In 2010, the Kharkiv Institute for Social Research published a report on the *Public Opinion Survey about the Work of the Police in Kharkiv*.²³ The survey included the aspect of perceived security in different Kharkiv districts and questions aimed at identifying undetected crime.

22 Cedos and Center for Law and Crime Research (2021). **Security Data in Ukraine: Limitations of departmental indicators and existing approaches** [Ukrainian].

23 Kharkiv Institute for Social Research (2010). **Public opinion survey about the work of the police in Kharkiv** (report on the findings of a sociological study) [Russian]. Kharkiv.

At the local level, an important research instrument is the **gender security audit**, which is the collection of information in order to evaluate and identify the locations with the highest risk of cases of harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls.²⁴

Working with data while planning security policies allows the planners to analyze crime indicators. It helps distinguish between different types of crime, such as severe violent crime (primarily murder), crimes against property (e. g., petty theft or graffiti on walls), or so-called victimless crime (e. g., unregulated street vending). The nature of these crimes is different, and therefore different policies can be useful for their prevention. For example, a popular measure in Ukrainian cities is to set up CCTV cameras in public spaces, public buildings, and in the streets. However, research demonstrates that video surveillance is only effective for certain spaces and types of crimes, such as in parking lots to help solve crimes against property, such as car theft. At the same time, video surveillance may bring privacy risks and displace vulnerable categories from the streets and public spaces. There can also be a “displacement effect,” when antisocial behavior is displaced outside the range of surveillance cameras into neighboring streets, other areas, or private spaces.²⁵

One of the traditional public order enforcement measures is policing. Challenges in the Ukrainian context include a lack of social insurance against accidents for police officers, as well as their excessive workload caused by assigning them functions that are not inherent in police work. The police is often the institution people appeal to when they do not know who is supposed to solve a certain problem. A significant share of calls are related to dealing with homeless people or people with mental health disorders. Meanwhile, the police do not have the instruments to solve the problems behind these calls in the long term or in a complex way. Building **social support networks** is necessary to deal with this problem. It is important to both establish cooperation between the police and social services and strengthen the very system of social service provision, social housing, ensuring access to food and water for the poorest social groups.²⁶

24 UN Women (2021). **Methodical recommendation on how to conduct safety audit in the framework of UN Women Global Flagship Initiative**. Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls.

25 Cedos and Center for Law and Crime Research (2021). **Security Data in Ukraine: Limitations of departmental indicators and existing approaches** [Ukrainian].

26 Ibid.

Policing and patrolling has a limited capacity to improve security. People from marginalized groups can feel threatened when the number of police officers increases. One of the causes for this can be cases of biased treatment of members of some social groups, such as the Roma, LGBTQIA+, or homeless people, by the police themselves. Fighting unregulated venting can deprive some people of opportunities to obtain critically necessary income when they lack other available alternatives. This often affects women, particularly elderly women from rural areas who sell fruit and vegetables or flowers because their retirement pensions are insufficient to provide them with a decent standard of living. Urban space policing often involves units such as municipal guards or municipal security in addition to the police. On the one hand, they can be a more effective alternative to private security firms in terms of guarding public buildings. However, these units do not have the authority to properly perform police functions. Even though martial law requires special measures, generally in peaceful times militarization of the police can negatively affect proper upholding of human rights, accountability, and nuanced approaches to solving problematic situations.²⁷ In general, police accountability and cooperation with the community is an important component of security policies which, however, must be based on ensuring and **upholding human rights**.

The organization of spaces affects whether one feels safe in them. Streets can often be perceived as dangerous, particularly for girls and women, as they can become spaces for attacks, harassment, and sexualized violence. In order to reduce these risks, the following space planning measures can be taken:

- avoid creating closed-off narrow passages and dead ends;
- install proper lighting of paths, walks, closed passages;
- install wide-angle mirrors on corners to improve the visibility of dead ends;
- create active facades with building windows, shop windows and cafes instead of solid walls (as well as doors with windows instead of solid doors, transparent fences instead of tall solid fences);
- arrange seating areas, areas for games and sports in the streets and in public spaces.^{28 29}

27 Bahlai, S., Bobrova, A., Herasym, H., Kazdobina, J., Kormych, B., Maliarenko, T. & Monastyrskyi, Y. (2021). **Human Security: Specifics and Opportunities for Ukraine**. Kyiv.

28 Heffernan, E., Heffernan, T. and Pan, W. (2014). **The relationship between the quality of active frontages and public perceptions of public spaces**. *Urban Design International*, 19 (1), 92–102.

29 Heinrich Böll Foundation (2017). **How to Design a Fair City** [Ukrainian]. Art Knyha.

These measures encourage the development of “**eyes on the street**,” people who observe or can notice by accident (including from their windows) what is going on in a certain space, thus reducing the risk of crime.³⁰ Meanwhile, installation of fences, walls, warning signs and surveillance cameras can negatively affect the perception of danger. Creating “gated communities” by fencing off entire sections of the city may lead to the displacement of people who belong to vulnerable groups from urban spaces, exacerbation of spatial inequalities (the division of cities into rich and poor, safe and dangerous areas), and reduction in the number of “eyes on the street.” For example, a spike in robberies has been reported in one of Kyiv’s residential complexes, despite its fenced-off territory and video surveillance system,³¹ and the boom gates at its entrance once delayed the arrival of the rescue service during a fire.³²

● **EXAMPLE:** Participative solution of a security-related problem

In Zvyahel, Zhytomyr Region, a security challenge was caused by high numbers of stray animals and the associated threat of attacks and the spread of disease. In order to collectively develop solutions for this problem, a discussion was held with representatives of the local government, police, State Consumer Service, health care workers and veterinarians, associations of co-owners of apartment buildings, management of local businesses, and local residents. The developed solutions included creating an animal shelter, adopting pet care rules in the hromada’s territory, and conducting identification followed by spraying and neutering of stray animals.³³

One of the important aspects of gender-sensitive security policy at the local level is combating gender-based violence. Since the beginning of the full-scale war, the number of registered cases of gender-based violence in Ukraine has increased: in the first 5 months of 2023, there

30 Mistosite (2021). **The Death and Life of Great American Cities**. Jane Jacobs: excerpt from the book [Ukrainian].

31 Hmarochos (2019). **A spike of burglaries in Comfort Town residential complex**. Do fences and guards help improve security? [Ukrainian].

32 Hmarochos (2023). **During the drone attack at night, firefighters were stopped by the boom gates of Comfort Town residential complex** [Ukrainian].

33 Zvyahel Info (2023). **In Zvyahel, a roundtable discussed the ways to solve the problem of stray animals** [Ukrainian].

were 50% and 80% more of such cases than in the corresponding periods of 2022 and 2021.³⁴ In view of this, combating gender-based violence is an important priority of gender-sensitive recovery. In 2022, Ukraine ratified the Istanbul Convention, which provides a set of measures to be taken by the state in order to prevent gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is violence that is directed against a person because of that person's gender, gender identity or gender expression or that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately.³⁵

Violence against women is a type of gender-based violence. According to WHO estimates, one in three women experiences one or several kinds of gender-based violence within her lifetime (physical, psychological, economic, or sexual violence). Family or domestic violence happens within family relations and is often a type of gender-based violence, because the overwhelming majority of its victims are women.

Local government bodies play an important role in creating the infrastructure for combating gender-based violence. This includes training specialists, including psychologists, doctors, police officers; creating mobile teams for social and psychological assistance to victims of domestic violence, Polina police response groups, and providing them with all the required resources, including vehicles. To combat domestic violence, it is critically necessary to establish **crisis centers** and provide long-term social housing. If a person experiencing domestic violence has no access to housing separate from the abuser's place of residence, this facilitates the continuation of the situation of violence. As of April 2023, Ukraine had 43 day centers for social and psychological aid, 46 around-the-clock shelters (up to 90 days of accommodation), and 46 around-the-clock crisis rooms (up to 10 days of accommodation).³⁶ According to Council of Europe recommendations, there should be one crisis center per

34 hromadske (2023). **A rapid spike in the number of domestic violence cases in Ukraine.** What is the cause? [Ukrainian].

35 (2012). **Directive 2012/29/EU** establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, Article 6.

36 NSSSU. **Specialized support services for individuals who are victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence** [Ukrainian].

200,000 women and one consultation center per 50,000 women; the number of these centers is currently lower in Ukraine. In addition, a referral system should be established for timely referral of victims to services that provide the required services of health care, psychological and social help, safety and protection, access to justice and legal aid, etc. Special attention as part of establishing a system of preventing and combating gender-based violence should be paid to questions of violence against LGBTQIA+ people and questions of accessibility.



Social protection

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, 91% of women with children in Europe spend at least one hour per day on **domestic work**, while among men this share is only 30%. Gender differences in performing domestic work are the most pronounced in families with children. On average, employed women spend about 2.3 hours per day on domestic work, while men spend 1.6 hours.³⁷ **Reproductive care work** – that is caring for children and adults or elderly people who require care – is mostly done by women, so they have less time and fewer opportunities to do productive work and engage in professional fulfillment which brings income and future pension benefits. The gender pay gap in Ukraine is 18.6%.³⁸ Since women's income is lower than men's throughout their lives, and their work experience is also shorter due to performing care work, women's pensions are lower as well.

Since the beginning of the full-scale war, the amount of domestic and care work has increased, particularly due to displacement, bombings, limited power and water supply, and the need to organize remote learning for children.³⁹ Many women have been forced to undertake more responsibility for managing their households after family separation due to the war, as well as to care for wounded soldiers among their family members.

Developing a system of social protection is a key area of combating gender inequality. In particular, this involves the development of institutions that take over reproductive care work, namely childcare and care for elderly people or adults who require care. This helps create opportunities to return to the labor market (or eliminate the need to leave the labor market) for people, primarily women, who perform care work in families due to the lack of a social protection system.

Regarding children, the key is to develop a system of preschool education, **kindergartens**. Its basis is a network of municipal institutions

37 EIGE (2021). Gender Equality Index 2021 Report. **Gender differences on household chores entrenched from childhood.**

38 JurFem (2024). 18.6% less. **What is the gender pay gap?** [Ukrainian].

39 Cedos (2023). **Nine months of full-scale war in Ukraine: thoughts, feelings, actions.**

that provide education free of charge, which makes it accessible for people from all social groups, including socially vulnerable ones. The development of a kindergarten network, as well as the arrangement of bomb shelters, is necessary to increase the coverage and ensure the uninterrupted operation of the preschool education system. In order to reduce the workload of caring for older children, it is important to ensure the functioning of the general secondary education system in the form of schools, as well as extracurricular education in the form of art and sports schools, clubs and extracurricular classes. Similarly to preschool education, a key challenge in wartime is to arrange bomb shelters for offline studies. An important step towards inclusivity are measures to compensate educational losses and to reduce educational inequality, particularly between urban and rural areas, including by optimizing secondary education institutions in communities.⁴⁰

Care for adults is associated with the system of **social service provision**. It is based on a network of municipal social service providers, because not all hromadas have equal capacity to commission services from non-governmental providers. The key challenges for providing quality services are associated with the lack of resources and material and technical basis for social centers, such as premises and vehicles, including the ones that are properly equipped for the use of people with disabilities and limited mobility.⁴¹ Overloading affects the system's limited capacity to provide complex social services which should involve various specialists in order to systematically address difficult life circumstances and help a person to restore their self-reliance. The need for such services has increased as a result of the war, particularly due to mass displacement and in the context of reintegration of veterans into civilian life.

The war and the associated difficulties are a significant emotional burden which significantly increases the need for **mental health care**. Emotional work, particularly psychological support, often falls on women in families, so the lack of professional mental health care can mean an increased workload for them. In addition to overcoming stereotypes about mental health care, there is a need to increase the capacity of social service centers and education institutions to provide mental health care.⁴²

40 Cedos (2023). [War and Education. How a Year of the Full-scale Invasion Influenced Ukrainian Schools](#).

41 Cedos (2024). [Study on issues of social protection and social rights in Ukraine: Satisfaction with social services](#) [Ukrainian].

42 Cedos (2024). [Psychological services in schools: Impact of the full-scale war](#) [Ukrainian].

An important limitation of the institutional care system is the working conditions and the amount of remuneration. Almost 99% of workers in preschool education institutions⁴³ and over 80% of workers in the social service provision system are women.⁴⁴ This work is difficult and low-prestige, and the average salary in both fields is significantly lower than the average wage across the country. Improving labor conditions, increasing salaries, increasing staff and introducing measures to prevent emotional burnout for care workers is critically important in order to increase their capacity to provide quality services.

Strengthening the social help system also requires both improving the process of complex evaluation of the needs of every individual who applies for social services, and widespread implementation of the practice of evaluating the need for social services at the hromada level. An instrument for collecting and systemizing these data is the creation of a **social passport of the hromada**, a document that includes information about the hromada's social structure, its available resources and capacities for providing services, and its social support needs.⁴⁵

One of the vulnerable social groups in Ukraine are elderly people. The war has made their situation even worse due to disruption of social connections, particularly in the context of forced displacement. Retirees are a vulnerable group even when we do not take into account the aspect of gender inequality. Elderly women are at a higher risk of finding themselves in a situation of poverty, because women's pensions are 30% lower than men's. 22% of elderly women and 13% of elderly men live on an amount below the minimum subsistence level. In addition, elderly people experience labor market discrimination by age, which makes their economic situation even more difficult.⁴⁶ Apart from the issue of decent pension benefits and expanding access to social services, important steps towards creating conditions for **active longevity** include measures to combat labor market discrimination as well as to expand the offers of cultural leisure and support civic activity among elderly people.

43 Dutchak, O., Strelnyk, O. & Tkalych, O. (2021). **Who will take care? Kindergartens in the context of gender inequality** [Ukrainian]. Gender in Detail.

44 Cedos (2022). **Employment in the field of social protection: Analysis of the key problems and consequences of the pandemic** [Ukrainian].

45 SSS (2023). **What a social passport is and why a hromada needs it** [Ukrainian].

46 Orlova, O., Volosevych, I. and Buchanan, J. (2023) **"I've lost the life I knew". Older people's experiences of the Ukraine war and their inclusion in the humanitarian response**. HelpAge.

The war, displacement, and economic transformations increase the relevance of **employment support** programs. It is important to focus on retraining measures, the development of professional education, the lifelong learning and adult education systems.⁴⁷ The existing government program of skills enhancement and retraining vouchers may not cover all the needs for such aid. Important limitations include the lack of short-term professional training programs on offer, and the lack of paid internship programs. Research shows that help with employment is the desired option of government support for restoring employment for the majority of people, but, at the same time, a significant share would prefer help with starting a business.⁴⁸ At present, these programs exist in the form of grants or affordable loans, but their effectiveness can be improved by adding education opportunities and mentorship support.

A critical precondition for the realization of human potential, safety, and decent living is access to housing. As of February 2024, 10% of Ukraine's housing stock has been destroyed or damaged as a result of the war,⁴⁹ while occupation and hostilities have forced millions of people to leave their homes. In order to provide sufficient and affordable housing to people who need it, the country needs a system of **social housing** in public ownership which is provided free of charge or with affordable rents. Access to social housing is a required element of support in case of crisis situations: natural disasters, domestic violence, homelessness as a result of fraud or conflicts with family.⁵⁰ An important component of the social housing system are shelters and crisis housing which is provided temporarily to people in urgent need. However, temporary housing alone is not sufficient, because a significant number of people, especially those belonging to vulnerable social groups, do not have the capacity to provide themselves with housing independently and therefore need long-term social housing. In the functioning of shelters and the social housing system, special attention should be paid to their accessibility for people with limited mobility, homeless people, Roma and LGBTQIA+ people.

47 DVV International (2021). **State Policy of Adult Learning and Education in Ukraine** (Expert Study).

48 Cedos (2022). **Employment, social protection, housing: The population's attitude towards government programs of socioeconomic support and the need for them.**

49 World Bank (2024). **Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment Released.**

50 Popova, D. & Riabchuk, A. (2018). **Factors of women's homelessness in Ukraine** [Ukrainian]. Research Notes of NaUKMA. Sociology. 2018. Volume 1.



Mobility

Spatial solutions in mobility planning in cities, towns and villages often only take into account the strongest users, and therefore more vulnerable groups live in the conditions of infrastructural discrimination. Prioritizing drivers can lead to neglecting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users. Certain decisions in urban planning (raised curbs, underground crossings and overpasses, uneven pavement) also ignore the needs of population groups with limited mobility, such as people with disabilities, people with strollers, elderly people. Gender sensitivity in mobility planning aims to take into account the interests of vulnerable groups and create equal opportunities in mobility. This can be illustrated with the principle of the “**mobility pyramid**,” in which the first priority are groups with limited mobility and pedestrians, followed by cyclists, public transit, and cars in the last position.

In order to understand the scope of gender gaps, it is important to conduct research and collect data about the mobility of residents. Most Ukrainian hromadas do not collect or analyze from the perspective of gender the data about who uses public transit and other urban infrastructure and for what purpose, and what problems and needs these groups have. Therefore, planning decisions risk proving to be ineffective and leading to restricted opportunities for vulnerable population groups.

At the local level, a strategic vision of mobility development can be presented in dedicated documents which are called **sustainable urban mobility plans** in European practice.⁵¹ Developing these plans should involve hromada residents in the design of the document, and the highly participatory process positively affects the quality of representation of the needs of different groups. Some Ukrainian communities which have already developed their plans collected their initial data with consideration for the gender distribution in order to understand the situation better.

51 European Commission (2024). [Sustainable urban mobility planning and monitoring](#).

● **EXAMPLE:** Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Poltava

The initial data collected for the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan revealed some of the differences between men and women in Poltava. For example, the Plan indicates that only 9% of cyclists in Poltava are women, while the share of men who use private cars is more than double the share of women. Among public transit, women prefer trolleybuses while men prefer buses and minibuses. In view of the collected data, the document defined the priority targets in mobility development, namely increasing road safety, improving the attractiveness of public transit, walkability and cycling traffic, as well as systematic collection and analysis of mobility data in the hromada. For example, target 6.1 “Creation of safe urban environment” envisions a situation when “Public transport is of high standard and free from harassment and violence, every woman or child feels safe and can travel without danger.”⁵²

Mobility studies in different countries demonstrate that women use **cars** much less frequently than men, but walk or use public transit much more frequently. If a household owns a car, the man is more likely to use it.⁵³ In addition, men’s routes are more linear – “work-home-work” – whereas women’s routes can be more complex. Women who perform care work move around the city more, and their routes between stores, education institutions and other destinations in the community are more complex and difficult.⁵⁴

Compared to private cars, which are an expensive purchase, **public transit** is a more affordable means of transportation, so its development should be a priority in mobility planning. Accessibility and quality can be negatively affected by things such as inefficient or interrupted route network, slow movement of public transit vehicles in the general car traffic, unreliable schedules, lack of passenger access to information about schedules, poorly equipped stops, the lack of a system of “single tickets” which force passengers to overpay for transfers. An example of solutions for such problems is a single municipal ticket, which is a system for paying transit fees which allows transfers without additional charges. It is gender-sensitive, because it allows people with complex routes who do not own private vehicles to move around the city.

52 (2019). **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan Poltava (draft)**.

53 Blumenberg, E., Schouten, A. and Brown, A. (2022). **Who’s in the driver’s seat? Gender and the division of car use in auto-deficit households**. Transportation Research. Part A: Policy and Practice.

54 Popova, Y. (2016). **City for the Many: How gender approach makes cities more fair** [Ukrainian]. Mistosite.

A special priority in mobility policies in hromadas should be regular passenger transit between localities, particularly in rural areas. They are critically important for reducing spatial inequalities in hromadas and improving access for residents of rural towns and villages to workplaces, social centers, administrative services, education and culture institutions, which are concentrated in bigger towns and cities. To ensure more inclusive mobility, it is important to introduce services such as social taxis (municipal on-demand transit which is equipped for transporting people with disabilities). Improving the quality and regularity as well as accessibility of transportation between hromadas is important to improve access to services provided at the regional or subregional level.

Public transit is often not adapted for the needs of population groups with limited mobility. For example, for wheelchair users who cannot use public transit vehicles that are not equipped with low floors or special ramps. Potential solutions include providing low-floor buses, trolleybuses and trams; constructing ramps and lifts; equipping stops; and training drivers in order to enable barrier-free passenger boarding and disembarking.

A separate important issue of gender sensitivity is the feeling of safety in mobility. Sociological research shows that sexual harassment in public spaces, particularly in public transit, is a systematic problem. For instance, as a result of a 2020 survey, 30% of respondents reported having experienced sexual harassment in public spaces at least once. Women were more likely to experience sexual harassment in public spaces: 42% of women and 15% of men reported this experience.⁵⁵ One of the practices in response to this problem is the installation of panic buttons in public transit or in online applications. They allow users to quickly report a threat of harassment and avoid it.

There are also a number of differences between men and women in **cycling**. In hromadas with undeveloped cycling infrastructure, there are more cyclists among men. At the same time, women will be more likely to cycle if safe conditions are created for it.⁵⁶ In small communities in Ukraine, people aged from 30–40 to elderly age tend to use bicycles, with the share of women reaching 30% to 60%. In medium-sized cities cyclists “get younger” at the age of 30+, while the share of women among them dropping to 10–15%. In large cities and in the capital, the share of women is even lower (8–15%), and the average age of a cyclist is even younger (20–40).⁵⁷

55 UNFPA (2020). **Findings of a survey on sexual harassment in public spaces** [Ukrainian].

56 Graystone, M., Mitra R. and Hess, P (2022). **Gendered perceptions of cycling safety and on-street bicycle infrastructure: Bridging the gap**. Transportation Research. Part D: Transport and Environment.

57 Bondarenko, I. (2020). **The need for the development of cycling and obstacles to its implementation in Ukrainian cities and regions** [Ukrainian].

The smaller the community, the more likely women are to feel confident on the road. Even though small communities do not always have developed cycling infrastructure, low car traffic and the lack of interchanges and complex intersections make it mentally easier for cyclists to be on the road. The lack of cycling infrastructure and the high degree of danger is also an obstacle for children. Research shows that children are much more likely to use bicycles as a means of transportation if bicycle parkings and safe cycling conditions are created.

The development of cycling infrastructure can include the construction of bike paths and lanes, installation of road signs and traffic lights, waiting stands, proper parking places, and public repair stations. Special attention must be paid to the safety of cycling routes on the intersections with car traffic. Important steps also include creating bike rental systems, particularly automated rental systems in big cities. Creating green cycling routes, opportunities for safe bike commutes to school, and general prioritization of cycling traffic can be the foundation of mobility policies in small hromadas.

● **EXAMPLE:** Cyclist count as part of a gender portrait in mobility

In order to examine the portrait of a cyclist in the community, a hromada can conduct a cyclist count. In Ukraine, the count is done by activists in cooperation with local governments.⁵⁸ During the count, the activists record the number of cyclists passing through the most popular roads and intersections and count how many of them ride on the sidewalk; they also record the gender distribution. Systematic counting of cyclists helps track the dynamics of changes in cycling and in the gender and age distribution of cyclists. For example, the 2022 count in Kyiv showed that only 13% of the cyclists were women. This indicator is almost the same as the data for 2015.⁵⁹

One of the successful examples of cycling infrastructure development is the Myrhorod Hromada of the Poltava Region, where the count has been conducted annually since 2015. The same year, the hromada adopted a Cycling Concept which envisioned the construction of cycling routes, an increase in the number of bike parking spots, measures to popularize cycling as a proper means of transportation, etc. Within 6 years, the share of cyclists increased from 35% to 40%.⁶⁰

58 U-Cycle (2020). **Cyclists count** [Ukrainian]. Kyiv.

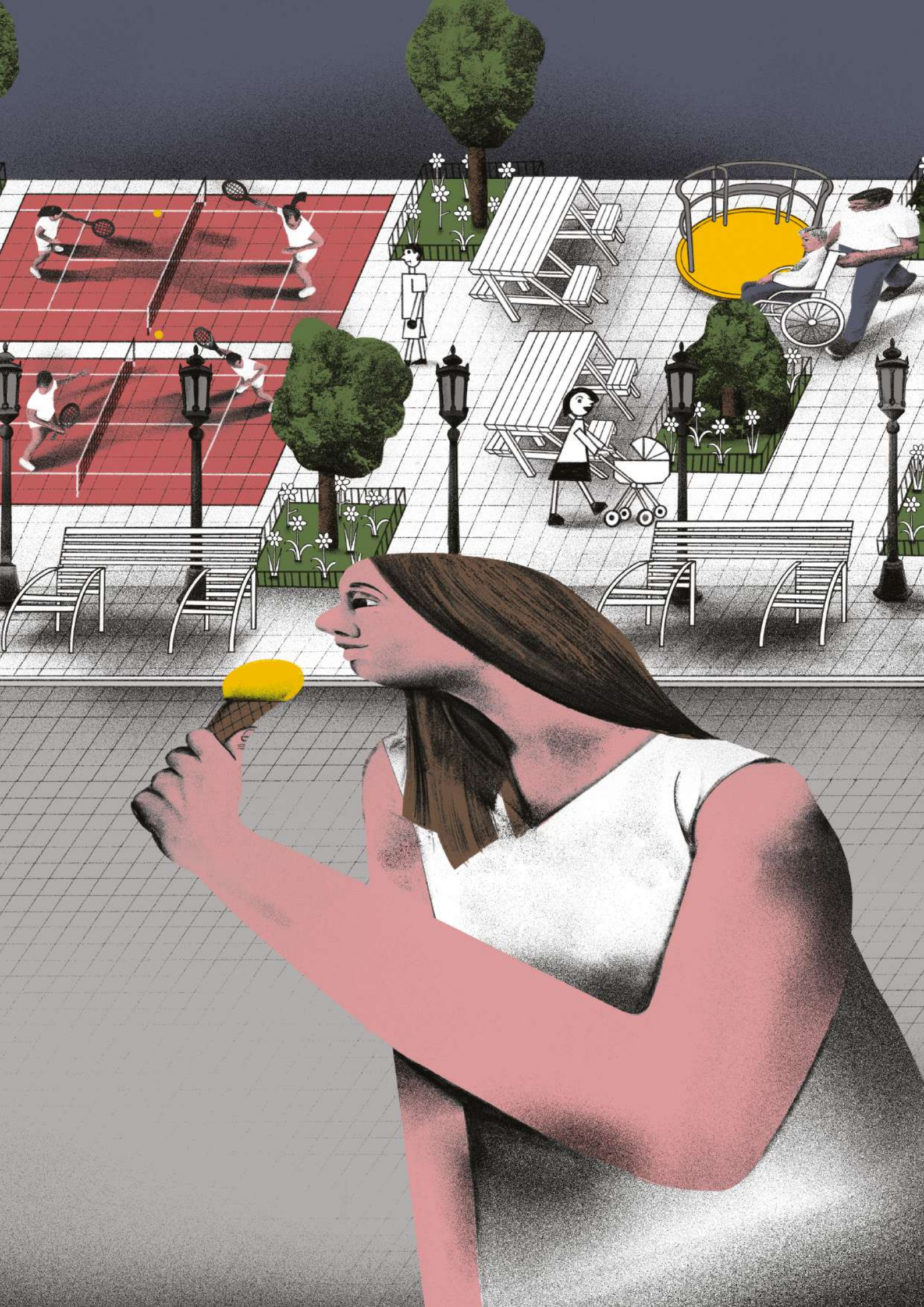
59 U-Cycle (2022). **Over half of cyclists in Kyiv ride on the road and bike lanes** [Ukrainian].

60 **Myrhorod. Building cycling infrastructure** [Ukrainian].

High-quality **pedestrian** infrastructure is important, because all people are pedestrians to some extent. Prioritizing the development of comfortable pedestrian routes is itself important to achieve inclusivity and overcome infrastructural barriers. At the same time, there are also special measures that make walking infrastructure gender sensitive. First of all, it is important to create comfortable movement conditions for population groups with limited mobility, particularly by creating ground-level crossings, lowering curbs, installing ramps or elevators, using pavement that is comfortable for wheelchair users, building raised pedestrian crossings, etc. Pedestrian infrastructure should be coherent and uninterrupted. Creating proper conditions for pedestrians requires sufficient sidewalk width without obstacles which allow at least two people to pass each other, as well as smooth pavement, availability of benches for breaks, lighting and navigation, garbage bins and drinking water fountains, green areas which provide shade in hot weather.

An important aspect of pedestrian infrastructure is the issue of safety, particularly road safety. It must be taken into account during the construction or reconstruction of streets and roads, and it should be an important mobility priority in hromadas. The key policy in this area is the achievement of **zero mortality** on roads (Vision Zero), which presupposes, among other things, speed limits for vehicles and traffic calming measures, such as arranging small-radius roundabout intersections and traffic islands, chicanes, raised crossings, etc. Other safety problems unrelated to traffic safety include underground pedestrian crossings, which are high-risk locations for sexual harassment. Ground-level pedestrian crossings – well-lit and, where necessary, regulated, raised or with added traffic islands – are a better and safer alternative to underground crossings and overpasses in city streets.

Obstacle-free infrastructure is necessary for infrastructural inclusivity. One of the consequences of the war is injuries, including loss of limbs, which means that the number of people with disabilities is increasing. There is a rule for infrastructure planning: if a person using a wheelchair can comfortably pass a certain route, it will also be comfortable for the majority of other people. In addition to the needs of people with musculoskeletal impairments, it is also important to consider the needs of other groups of people with disabilities, such as people with impairments, complete or partial loss of vision or hearing. Free movement requires architectural accessibility of spaces, namely free access to building entrances, tactile strips and tactile information signs, audible pedestrian signal devices, availability of universal bathrooms, etc. According to various studies, only 4% to 21% of infrastructural facilities in Ukraine are accessible to groups with limited mobility. The current construction regulations include detailed standards for making infrastructure accessible. In order to ensure inclusivity, each street reconstruction or other spatial changes in hromadas must be accompanied by creating the corresponding infrastructural elements.



Leisure

Leisure is an experience and state aimed at engaging in one's interests and satisfying one's needs, particularly cultural ones, through opportunities for self-expression, relaxation, pleasure and self-improvement. Access to leisure practices affects the level of satisfaction with life and the level of physical and mental health.⁶¹ Thus, leisure plays an important role for physical and mental recovery, the need for which increases as a result of the war. High-quality infrastructure for leisure can be part of a system of rehabilitation for people who have survived war trauma, for internally displaced people or veterans.

Gender, socioeconomic situation, age, degree of mobility, and other factors can affect people's leisure practices and their ability to use various options for spending their leisure time. This **accessibility** or inaccessibility may have a spatial and social dimension. The spatial dimension is related to factors such as the lack of barriers for people with limited mobility; the availability of bathrooms, including gender-neutral bathrooms; the availability of changing tables accessible to people of different gender identities, fathers and mothers caring for babies; the availability of sufficient seating and drinking water fountains.

The social aspect of accessibility is associated with limits on the access of certain social groups, primarily based on their socioeconomic status and financial means. In view of this, one of the key measures for creating gender-sensitive and inclusive leisure infrastructure is to create **non-commercial** leisure spaces which are accessible regardless of one's ability to pay an entrance fee or pay for a service. For example, a square with tables that belong to a cafe or a private sports club are commercial leisure spaces with limited access for a fee, while a park with seating places, sports grounds and playgrounds, board game tables is a non-commercial space accessible to everyone.

The foundation of leisure infrastructure are **public spaces** and nature recreation areas. Open public spaces which are part of the city landscape include squares, parks, outdoor spaces, embankments, beaches. The arrangement of comfortable public spaces requires taking into

61 Cedos (2020). [Research on leisure time and cultural needs of urban youth in Ukraine](#).

account the needs of different groups of people: children, teenagers, elderly people, people with limited mobility. The instruments for this include functional zoning, which allows to create multifunctional spaces adapted to the needs of different social groups and practices at once. These spaces include areas for quiet leisure (tables, seats, benches) and for spending time more actively with varying degrees of difficulty for people with different levels of physical fitness and different ages, including children of different ages. Access to social interaction in shared public spaces is a factor that improves wellbeing and can be especially relevant for elderly people.

The following steps can be taken to improve the inclusivity of outdoor leisure spaces⁶²:

- creating a fear-free environment, which requires sufficient lighting, the absence of dark inaccessible places, such as dead ends or thick vegetation which are not see-through and thus reduce the feeling of safety;
- creating open spaces where people from different groups can be at the same time without competing for the space, such as sports grounds where several teams can play at once, which allows girls to feel safer;
- installing seats of different heights and sizes, separate chairs with armrests for elderly people and people with limited mobility at sufficient intervals in park areas, squares, and other public spaces.

In addition to outdoor public spaces, another important component of leisure infrastructure are indoor public spaces. The foundation of this infrastructure in hromadas is a network of **culture institutions** — public libraries and club institutions — as well as other facilities such as hubs, community centers and youth centers. The program content of these spaces should take into account the needs of different audiences. For example, public libraries can be used not only as book storage but also as spaces for residents to meet up and spend their leisure time together in group cultural and social practices: masterclasses, education institutions, creative meetings and film screenings, collective discussions of community problems, etc. It is important for these

62 Popova, Y. (2016). **City for the Many: How gender approach makes cities more fair** [Ukrainian]. Mistosite.

institutions to work with public initiatives and allow them to use their space for public activity. Training the workers of culture institutions in organizing and facilitating public events can help these institutions expand the range of their activities and become multifunctional centers of community building which support civic initiatives and promote social cohesion in hromadas. In addition, these spaces can play an important role during the war by acting as “unbreakability points” (places with access to power and connection during blackouts), volunteering centers (for example, places to weave camouflage nets or hold fundraiser events), humanitarian hubs where humanitarian aid is collected and distributed.

An important component of leisure are athletic activities, both collective and individual. In view of this, the development of leisure infrastructure must include **athletic infrastructure**: both indoor municipal gyms or pools and outdoor grounds for various games (football, basketball, ping pong, chess, petanque, etc.), outdoor gyms, jogging, cycling, walking and trekking routes. Athletic infrastructure should consider the diversity of needs depending on one’s level of physical fitness, age and gender, offering enough opportunities for games and physical activity for different groups of people.

● **EXAMPLE:** Multifunctional space of Urban Camp Lviv

The cultural and social center Urban Camp Lviv, organized in a Soviet modernist building that has been transferred to Lviv’s municipal ownership, is an example of revitalisation of an existing building into a cultural and community center. It has a dormitory for internally displaced people, a bomb shelter, rooms and outdoor spaces for events. The space was equipped with the involvement of over 300 volunteers.⁶³

Policies for organizing leisure spaces must be based on the principle of participation and consideration for the needs of different social groups. On the one hand, it means involving potential users in the planning of spaces and events. On the other hand, it is important to identify, symbolically and materially support, and strengthen self-organized **grassroots practices and initiatives** which are often invisible.

63 **Urban Camp.**

For example, gardening and cultivation of areas around apartment buildings, which is usually an activity done by elderly women, is an important element of leisure for its direct participants and helps make cities greener.⁶⁴ Support for and development of these practices can facilitate cohesion, capability and resilience of neighborhood communities.

One of the measures to support local initiatives, especially in large hromadas, can be the creation of a dedicated office in the local government structure in accordance with the “one-stop shop principle,” to which grassroots and civic initiatives can appeal for support and accompaniment in their interaction with other government departments and bodies in order to undergo the procedures required for implementing a certain initiative.⁶⁵ Support for youth initiatives can be a separate important aspect of leisure and youth policies in a hromada, as well as of the activities of youth centers. In this context, the key effort should be to engage young people and support their activities in a range of thematic fields and sectors of local development rather than limit youth participation only to youth policies themselves.

● **EXAMPLE:** Youth engagement in gender-sensitive urban planning

In Trostianets Hromada, Sumy Region, the non-governmental organization STEM is FEM conducted a training course in urbanism for girls and young women aged 15 to 22. The hromada, particularly city council representatives in regional development, project activities, international cooperation, urban planning, architecture, and State Architectural and Construction Inspection, worked together with the NGO on an inclusive project of renovation of the square near the train station, which was destroyed as a result of hostilities; they applied gender-sensitive planning and took into account the needs of people with limited mobility.

64 Popova, Y. (2022). **Who should we thank for the hibiscus? Women making cities green** [Ukrainian]. Gender in detail.

65 Hryshchenko, M. (2016). **“The Right to the City”: How the municipality should collaborate with local initiatives**. Mistosite.

Conclusions

The implementation of the gender equality and inclusion principle in recovery and development at the local level involves the identification and consideration of the needs and experiences of different social groups. The result is often the creation of public policies which benefit not only the least privileged, but also all the other people in society.

The essential components of implementing the gender-sensitive approach include research and evidence-based decisions, participatory practices and public participation in decision making, and multilevel governance. **Research**, analysis of needs and data collection are necessary for making justified decisions based on evidence and on critical analysis of previous experiences and potential consequences of the projects and programs that are being implemented. Access to information, **participatory practices** and decision making that involves stakeholders are necessary for giving different social groups an opportunity to defend their interests. **Multilevel governance** is necessary to coordinate the efforts of national, regional, and local government bodies, whose participation is important for implementing systemic social change.

One of the cross-cutting issues that should be taken into account in the recovery and development of communities is sustainability, which presupposes long-term planning and consideration of full life cycles, the aspiration for climate neutrality, care for future generations, preservation and restoration of nature. **Climate change** is an important social challenge whose consequences disproportionately affect underprivileged social groups who historically bear less responsibility for the decisions which have had a negative impact on nature and have exacerbated climate change. Thus, the introduction of public policies aimed at climate change prevention and adaptation to climate change is closely linked with the achievement of social justice, gender equality, and inclusivity.

Not all the solutions needed for recovery and progress towards gender equality and inclusion require searching for new approaches or innovative developments. A significant share of critically important measures involves the implementation of such long-familiar policies as the development of public transportation and comfortable pedestrian infrastructure, or ensuring proper functioning of kindergartens and social service provision centers. Each of these solutions is undergoing internal changes and improvements and has its own innovative approaches: modern practice may differ from the practices that were

widespread decades ago. Nevertheless, in many cases the key task on the path towards implementing the gender-sensitive approach is not to look for ultramodern or digital innovations but to **develop basic public infrastructure**, which has been done for decades or centuries but sometimes, unfortunately, still fails to meet society's needs and requires attention at the level of public policies. Unfortunately, in many cases the war has only exacerbated pre-existing challenges in these fields. It has resulted in the destruction of basic public infrastructure and an increased burden on this infrastructure due to forced displacement and growing needs due to the emergence of new vulnerabilities.

One of the risks in the implementation of the gender-sensitive approach is its **imitation**, taking measures that formally aim to achieve certain goals but actually do not promote them in practice. Since gender equality and inclusion is often a mandatory requirement to receive national or international funding, projects or programs can, in some cases, simulate expected actions or results. This is not always due to malicious intent: certain measures are often imposed by donors without taking into account the local context. For example, appointing a representative for gender equality can be ineffective in a situation of understaffing or a lack of decent working conditions, as a result of which this individual has excessive workloads and lacks capacity to properly fulfill their new duties. Developing a Safe City program without determining the key problems and analyzing alternative options for their solution in advance may lead to a situation in which perceived safety among vulnerable social groups deteriorates as a result of the implemented solutions.

One of the ways to prevent the risks is training, developing skills, and exchanging experiences, including international experiences. Public control, audit, and independent evaluation of public policies can help prevent instances where there is a lack of integrity. Systematic approach and search for the structural causes of existing problems, strategic planning and established connections between strategic and tactical solutions, and coordination within communities and local governments between different departments will help avoid ineffective measures. **Integrity**, good governance, and democracy are critically important in the recovery process. In order to implement the declared principles in practice, it is necessary not only to declare but also to sincerely support these ideas as well as practice their application in one's work on a daily basis.

Recommendations

● GOVERNANCE

- 1. Encourage representation of women and people who belong to vulnerable population groups in key political positions.** It is important to both ensure their participation in elected representative bodies, such as councils, and appoint them to positions in executive bodies, including the top leadership positions. It is necessary in this context to ensure decent working conditions and remuneration for public servants. It is especially important to strive for higher representation in fields which operate with a lot of resources and in which women have traditionally been underrepresented, such as the construction field. Useful steps can also include appointing representatives for gender policy and creating councilor groups for gender issues.
- 2. Make public and administrative buildings inclusive and accessible to different groups of users.** Planning and design should consider the experiences and needs of different people, including people with children, people with disabilities, elderly people, in order to make sure that they can comfortably use public services. It is important to arrange accessible entrances, waiting areas, workplaces and bathrooms. It is advisable to offer gender-neutral bathrooms and changing tables accessible to people with different gender identities, fathers and mothers caring for babies. It is necessary to provide sufficient seating for waiting areas and install convenient navigation, build children's areas or children's rooms.
- 3. Engage residents in decision making, taking special steps to ensure the participation of vulnerable social groups.** To make the engagement effective, engagement events should be conducted at a time that is convenient for the invited people and in places that are accessible to them, inclusive and comfortable for different groups of users. There has to be proper informing through communication channels used by the target audiences. When choosing the instruments or methods of engagement, it is important to take into account the experiences of different social groups – for example, by offering not only online but also offline mechanisms, because some people do not have uninterrupted internet connection or an advanced level of computer literacy.

Specific engagement measures can include creating dedicated advisory or expert bodies, including with regard to issues of gender equality and inclusion.

4. **Collect data on local development which include distribution by gender and other important characteristics.** These characteristics can include age, having or not having children, having or not having disabilities, etc. In order to track the dynamics of changes, data should be collected regularly. It is also important to establish a system of proper storage, use, and exchange of data.

● BUDGETING

5. **Analyze the available data and conduct research, including research of needs.** The findings of this research should be taken into account in decision making and local development planning, funding distribution and evaluation of needs for certain infrastructure. Examples of useful research for local development include gender analysis and the creation of gender profiles, the creation of social passports, the conduction of gender security audits, victimology surveys, and mobility research.
6. **Conduct evaluation of the quality of service provision, introduce mechanisms for user feedback.** Proper monitoring and evaluation of local development programs can help identify difficulties and improve the quality of the provided services. In order to identify the existing barriers, it can also be important to study the experiences of people who do not receive certain services.

● SECURITY

7. **Take perceived security into account while organizing outdoor spaces by enabling the presence of “eyes on the street.”** Stimulation of outdoor activity, proper lighting, and the creation of active and open facades increases the likelihood of people being outside or people observing the outdoor space from inside the buildings, which positively affects perceived security. Meanwhile, narrow passages, gated territories, tall fences and solid facades make being in these spaces feel dangerous. The use of surveillance cameras is only justified in specific cases, primarily to prevent theft and crimes against property – for example, in parking lots.

8. **Build the system of preventing and combating gender-based violence, including mobile teams and crisis centers.** It is important to train professionals, particularly psychologists, doctors, and police officers, create mobile social and psychological help teams for victims of domestic violence as well as Polina police response groups, and purchase vehicles for them. The development of the network of crisis centers involves creating shelters, centers for social and psychological help, crisis rooms, and establishing the proper functioning of the referral system.

● **SOCIAL PROTECTION**

9. **Develop the network of care facilities, particularly kindergartens and social service provision centers.** Expanding the network of preschool education institutions, arranging bomb shelters at the institutions, and strengthening the capacity of the network of municipal institutions that provide social services by increasing their staff and improving their material and technical basis must be accompanied by improvements in working conditions and pay increases, as well as measures to prevent emotional burnout for the workers of these institutions.
10. **Build the system of mental health care provision in hromadas.** An increased need for mental health care among people affected by the war, internally displaced people, veterans and their families requires measures both to overcome stereotypes about mental health care and to expand options for receiving long-term mental health care in hromadas, including free-of-charge care. This care system can involve social centers and services, rehabilitation and health care institutions, as well as education institutions, workplaces, community centers, etc. Mental health care should be provided in accordance with the needs of the people who apply for it.
11. **Create retraining and professional development programs to facilitate employment.** The development of the professional education and adult education system must be accompanied by its integration with the system of employment assistance. There is a need to create short-term professional development and retraining courses at existing education institutions, as well as to open new centers for adult education. Programs for the development of entrepreneurship through grants and preferential loans can be amended with training and mentorship opportunities. Special attention should be paid to the needs of elderly people and to combating gender and age discrimination in the labor market.

12. **Develop the system of long-term social housing.** It is necessary to increase the supply of long-term municipally owned housing that is rented out to people in need, free of charge or for an affordable price. The development of the social housing system requires improving the capacity of local government bodies to manage this housing. The key priority is to resettle internally displaced people who are living in temporary housing and compact accommodation facilities into long-term housing. A special focus of housing policy in hromadas should be on overcoming homelessness, creating shelters for homeless people, and establishing programs for re-socialization and long-term housing provision.

● **MOBILITY**

13. **Develop public transit as a coherent and high-quality system.** The public transit network must allow all the residents in a hromada to take various routes without obstacles, with comfort and in a timely manner. The key steps towards this can include the creation of a single-ticket system; arrangement of accessible passenger boarding and disembarkment; allocation of spaces for wheelchairs, strollers, bicycles, luggage or other large items; creation of dedicated public transit lanes; installation of panic buttons; installation of information stands on public transit stops with schedules; and the equipment of stops for comfortable waiting in sunny, windy, and rainy weather.
14. **Develop pedestrian infrastructure.** Pedestrian infrastructure should be uninterrupted, barrier-free, comfortable for movement, and equipped with rest areas. Special attention should be paid to traffic calming measures in order to improve pedestrian safety with the aim to reach zero mortality. Important steps include constructing or renovating a network of sufficiently broad sidewalks with smooth surfaces, lowering curbs, installing benches for resting, creating green areas, prioritizing ground-level pedestrian crossings, properly lighting the crossings, installing raised crossings and traffic islands.
15. **Work on complex development of safe cycling infrastructure.** It is important to build bike paths and bike lanes as a coherent network which allows cyclists to plan their daily routes, as well as to create the accompanying infrastructure, such as signs and traffic lights, waiting stands, and proper parking spots. Additional measures can include the creation of bicycle rental systems, particularly automated rental systems in big cities. At the same time, in small hromadas it is possible to prioritize cycling traffic and create green cycling routes.

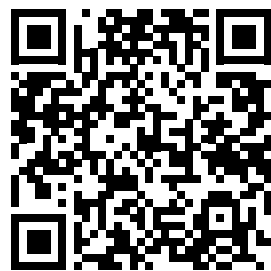
16. **Ensure accessibility and create possibilities for the free movement of groups with limited mobility.** All renovations of the street network must necessarily be accompanied by measures to improve accessibility. It is important to take into account both the needs of people with musculoskeletal impairments and the needs of other groups of people with disabilities, such as people with impairments, complete or partial loss of sight or hearing. Measures that help to ensure accessibility include installation of proper ramps, tactile strips, and audible pedestrian signal devices.

● LEISURE

17. **Create high-quality non-commercial public spaces and take into account the needs of different social groups in their design.** Open public spaces include squares, parks, outdoor spaces, embankments, beaches. Public space planning must include functional zoning and, accordingly, multifunctional use to meet different needs for quiet leisure or more active leisure of varying difficulty levels for people of different ages and with different fitness levels. It is important to ensure safety and sufficient lighting in these spaces as well as their accessibility. This includes accessibility for people with limited mobility; availability of gender-neutral bathrooms and changing tables accessible to people with different gender identities, fathers and mothers caring for babies; availability of drinking water fountains and seating of different heights and sizes.
18. **Develop and update the network of community and culture facilities, including libraries and club institutions.** The creation of multifunctional and accessible spaces must be accompanied with program activities that meet the needs of different groups of users. These can include masterclasses and education events, meetings with creators and film screenings, collective discussions of community problems. In addition, community and culture centers can provide their facilities for the development of civic activity, grassroots initiatives, and volunteering. An important aspect of the work of these institutions is community building and improving social cohesion.
19. **Develop the municipal sports infrastructure with consideration for the different needs of people depending on their gender and age.** This includes both municipal sports centers with gyms and swimming pools and open outdoor infrastructure: football fields; basketball, volleyball and tennis courts; spaces for playing chess, petanque and other games; training grounds; jogging, cycling,

walking, and trekking routes. Athletic infrastructure should provide enough opportunities for physical activities of varying difficulty for people with different levels of physical fitness, of different ages and genders.

- 20. Strengthen and support grassroots initiatives, including youth initiatives.** The basis for the development of these initiatives is the engagement of different social groups in the relevant community decision making. Identification, symbolic and material support for self-organized initiatives can require additional effort by government bodies, such as the creation of a dedicated office that will provide the required support in accordance with the “one-stop shop principle” and accompany public initiatives in their interaction with other departments and services. Programs aimed to support civic activity and self-organization should pay special attention to strengthening the initiatives of people who belong to vulnerable social groups and who may have less resources of their own to implement their ideas.



Further reading

All the literature provided in the reading list is in Ukrainian.

