

QUARTERLY DIGEST

APRIL – JUNE 2023

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **second edition of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society's (URCS) quarterly digest** (April – June 2023), designed to keep the Ukrainian Red Cross Society's partners and stakeholders informed about its current work and plans in the field of humanitarian advocacy and diplomacy in Ukraine and globally.

The Ukrainian Red Cross Society is **the largest voluntary humanitarian organization in Ukraine**. With its network of over 200 local branches, 1,500 staff members, and 8,000 volunteers, it has an unmatched coverage in the areas controlled by the Ukrainian government. Since the escalation of the conflict, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society has worked in close partnership with ICRC, IFRC, and Participating National Societies (PNS) to directly **assist more than 12 million people**.



KAKHOVKA HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

From the first hours of **the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant explosion**, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society has been at the forefront of a **complex emergency response**, which has involved **evacuating populations** -often while under intense shelling -, supporting 12,000 individuals with relief items, and providing much-needed consultations through its Mobile Health Units.

URCS is now gradually shifting its emergency response towards rehabilitation, recovery, and reconstruction activities. This includes supporting four communities to re-establish sustainable water systems, working with Kherson Vodokanal to repair water distribution and treatment infrastructure, and promoting public health and hygiene.





HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE OF THE UKRAINIAN RED CROSS

in the Kherson region

640

CONSULTATIONS PROVIDED BY MOBILE HEALTH UNITS

THE MOBILE HEALTH UNIT VISITED 5 TEMPORARY SHELTERS IN KHERSON TO GIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL AID, MAINLY TO ELDERLY PEOPLE.

639

VICTIMS RECEIVED PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID AND SUPPORT

243

PEOPLE EVACUATED, MOST OF WHOM HAVE LIMITED MOBILITY

60

SINGLE PEOPLE IN KHERSON CITY AND REGION RECEIVE ASSISTANCE UNDER THE "HOME BASED CARE" PROGRAM

29

PETS EVACUATED



MINE DANGER

Delivered to Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions: **2000 marking signs** and **2 000 meters of warning tape.**

1 029 people in Mykolaiv, Odesa and Kherson were briefed about mine danger.



PROVISION OF HUMANITARIAN AID

Red Cross volunteers are distributing:



HYGIENE KITS

7 218



FOOD KITS

5 152



BEDROOM KITS

1 380



BLANKETS

602



MATTRESSES

300



KITCHEN SETS/
KITCHEN UTENSILS

225



TARPAULINS

794



CHARGERS

100



INFANT FOOD

480
packages



DIAPERS

1 586
packages



DRINKING WATER

25 876
liters



ANIMAL FEED

1 350
kg



Ukraine's Rehabilitation, Recovery and Reconstruction

The Ukrainian Red Cross Society places significant emphasis on Ukraine's rehabilitation, recovery, and reconstruction in its One Plan for 2023-2025, both operationally and in its **humanitarian diplomacy activities**. Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors, represented by the URCS, on the ground are well-equipped to be the bridge between **life-saving emergency response and longer-term recovery initiatives**, thanks to the extensive footprint of URCS in Ukraine.

To that effect, URCS and the Lviv City Administration co-hosted **the International Rehabilitation Forum in Lviv** on the 12th and 13th of April, bringing together specialists from Ukraine and all over the world – state and local authorities, doctors, experts, representatives of embassies, and international institutions – to address the country's rehabilitation needs and ensure that all those affected by the conflict receive adequate care and can reintegrate into society.

The forum saw the official opening of **Lviv's "Unbroken" rehabilitation hub**, which concentrates state-of-the-art expertise and a holistic approach towards rehabilitating war victims, established with **the support of URCS**. The forum concluded with the adoption by Movement partners of the "Lviv Call to Action," which urges the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to share expertise, advocate for funding, and foster innovation to address **Ukraine's mental, social, and physical rehabilitation needs**.



On the 19th of June in Brussels, the URCS also collaborated with the Head of the Ukrainian Mission to the European Union to host a panel discussion on **Early Recovery in Ukraine**. This event brought together government, EU, and civil society actors to reflect on **the intersection of humanitarian and recovery needs** in Ukraine and the critical role that local actors are already playing in both areas. It was an opportunity for key stakeholders to present and discuss their recovery and **reconstruction plans** in Ukraine, highlighting the important role of local actors in this area and exploring ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination.

Additionally, the event marked the opening of URCS's 'We Near' temporary exhibit, showcasing a unique collection of photographs that capture the dedicated work of its volunteers operating on the frontlines of the response.



The insights and outcomes from the Brussels panel discussion fed into reflections around the Chatham House event in London on June 20 and the subsequent **Ukraine Recovery Conference** hosted by the governments of Ukraine and the UK on June 21-22. During these conferences, the leadership of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) actively participated and advocated for an inclusive approach that **balances recovery and reconstruction activities** with the continuation of humanitarian action in Ukraine.

Cross-continental cooperation: From June 26th to July 2nd, a delegation from URCS conducted an official visit to Argentina **to strengthen cross-continental dialogue and gain experience** from the Argentine Red Cross on the functioning of nursing schools. The aim was to model some of these good practices in Ukraine. In Buenos Aires, URCS also held a series of meetings with various stakeholders, including the Embassy of Ukraine to Argentina and Ukrainian diaspora organizations, with the view to ensure that people who flee Ukraine can access comprehensive humanitarian support abroad.



European Youth Engagement: URCS prioritizes youth engagement and development, boasting an impressive 45% of volunteers under 30. Two URCS youth representatives participated in the IFRC European Youth Coordination meeting in Braga, Portugal, from April 22nd to 25th. They showcased key activities **involving young URCS volunteers in national humanitarian response** and contributed to the European Youth Priority Framework for development. The youth delegation emphasized mental health, migration, and youth in conflict and emergencies, garnering support from other young people and national societies in the European region. Additionally, the URCS youth delegation played a pivotal role in launching a new youth sub-regional network comprising countries like Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. This initiative fosters Eastern European partnerships and enables joint youth projects, empowering URCS youth to make a positive impact in the humanitarian emergency response region.



Evidence-based humanitarian diplomacy: The URCS is always seeking to develop and improve its evidence-based approach to operations and **humanitarian diplomacy**, to ensure its **strategic objectives meet the needs on the grounds**. For example, the URCS has recently started working with the IMPACT initiative to understand the population movement needs of those who are crossing Ukrainian borders. In May, URCS and the Red Cross EU Office in Brussels published a report assessing key aspects of the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) and the EU's future response to people displaced from Ukraine from a humanitarian perspective. The report is based on data collected through 21 National Societies in Europe. You can access it via this [link](#).



HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY SPOTLIGHT | II QUARTER 2023

International Recognition and Awards: On May 30, in Madrid, **Queen Letizia of Spain awarded the URCS the Gold Medal of the Spanish Red Cross.** It was presented to the President of the URCS as a symbol of the significant contribution of the Ukrainian Red Cross to the humanitarian response of unprecedented scale, against the background of a full-scale war.



INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Strengthening the National Intergovernmental Commission on IHL Implementation

On May 22, the National Intergovernmental Commission on IHL Implementation, facilitated by the URCS, had its first meeting, a significant milestone since its establishment on February 1, 2022. Iryna Vereschuk, the Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories, chaired the meeting. The IHL Commission updated its composition to ensure representation from relevant stakeholders and created sub-working groups to address specific IHL aspects.

Increased cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine

In March 2023, **the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine established a new department of international law**, focusing on IHL dissemination, implementation, and compliance. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) has actively supported the Ministry of Defence, helping establish direct bilateral communication channels with foreign Ministries of Defence, with support from PNS and foreign IHL Commissions. This collaboration aims to strengthen ties and enhance collaboration on IHL, **exchanging knowledge and best practices for upholding humanitarian principles during armed conflicts.** Recently, a URCS visit to the Canadian Red Cross led to direct bilateral communication channels between Ukraine's and Canada's Ministries of Defence on the subject of improving the IHL training curriculum used for Ukrainian Armed Forces during overseas sessions.

IHL knowledge dissemination

In the past 6 months, **URCS also focused on disseminating IHL knowledge** among various groups such as security forces, civil servants, journalists, academics etc. **URCS conducted 18 trainings with close to 500 participants**, both online and offline. Partnerships with key educational institutions were established to strengthen and expand education and knowledge dissemination on IHL. URCS's efforts are essential in promoting a better understanding and application of IHL principles among practitioners.



MOVEMENT PARTNERSHIP – BEST PRACTICE

The British Red Cross (BRC) has significantly expanded its presence in Ukraine by establishing its first country office in 2022 to work meaningfully and sustainably with URCS. This expansion was made possible, in part, thanks to a **strategic partnership** with the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO). Since February 2022, BRC has collaborated with URCS and the IFRC to deliver cash assistance across Ukraine, including to those seeking refuge in Kyiv and western regions from areas of active conflict in the east and north. In response to **harsh winter conditions resulting from damages** to key infrastructures, BRC provided crucial support to URCS, ensuring access to electricity, heating, and other essential services. URCS and BRC have also closely partnered on **humanitarian diplomacy** and **international humanitarian law**. BRC serves as a co-chair of the Movements' humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy working group in the country, working tirelessly with Movement partners to position URCS as a preferred partner to its public authorities in the humanitarian field.

BRC has been invited by URCS to specifically work with regional and local branches in Chernihivska oblast, Kyiv city, and Kyivska oblast, all of which were severely impacted by the escalation in the conflict. This includes supporting URCS' flagship home-based care programs, benefiting hundreds of home-bound individuals residing in isolated neighborhoods of Kyiv. Most recently, BRC allocated 1 million GBP to the URCS' Emergency Pooled Fund to support those affected by **the explosion of the Khakovka dam**. BRC is committed to working with URCS in the long term and has taken the lead on establishing an Endowment Fund to ensure continued support for URCS when resources become scarce. To this end, BRC has provided an initial £10 million towards this financing instrument, with the aim of attracting more funding from partners. The Endowment Fund empowers the Ukraine Red Cross to adapt their structures and systems for a sustainable future by providing certainty of the availability of medium-term, flexible resources.

URCS delegation visit to London

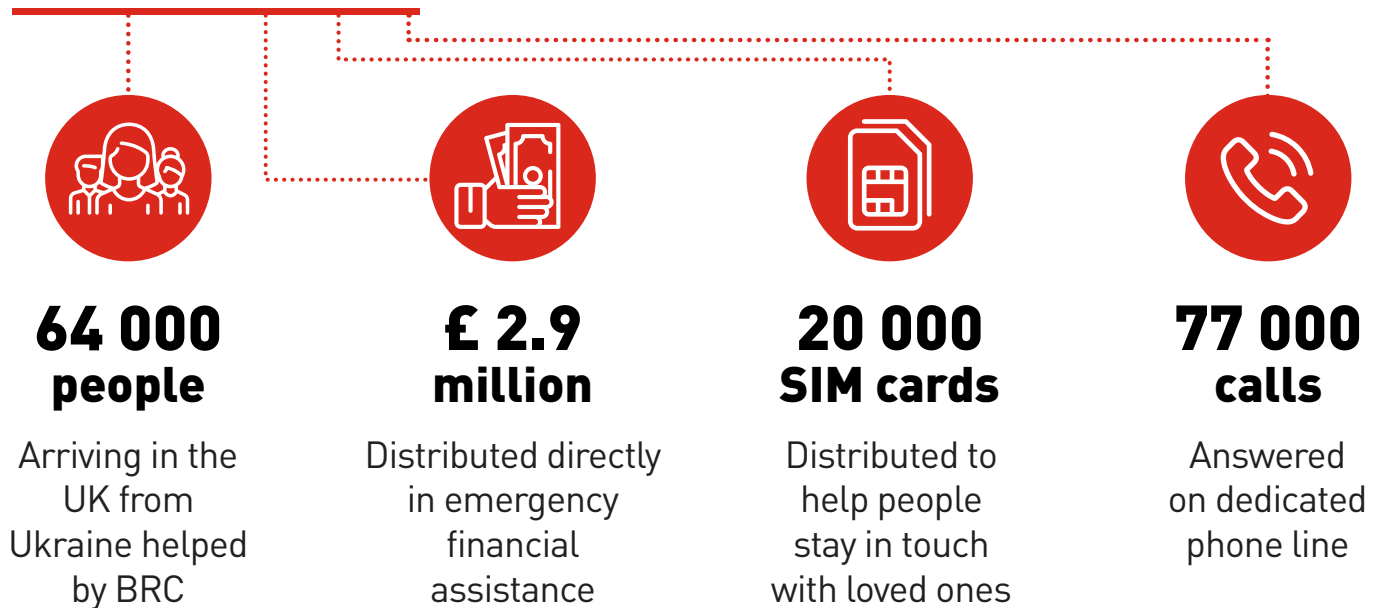
From the 17th to the 19th of May a senior delegation from the Ukrainian Red Cross visited London, including Director General Maksym Dotsenko.

There were a number of **high-level policy engagements**, including a parliamentary breakfast at Westminster **on current humanitarian needs** and **the recovery landscape in Ukraine**, interviews on Tonight with Andrew Marr and on the BBC news channel, and a meeting with FCDO senior officials.



MOVEMENT PARTNERSHIP – BEST PRACTICE

BRC's response in the UK



BRC is also working to influence the UK government to improve the support available for those who have arrived from Ukraine. Following the launch of its recent report *Fearing, Fleeing, Facing the Future*, BRC's advocacy team has been working closely with MPs and government departments to call for improvements to the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Upcoming Advocacy Events:

URCS IHL Summer School. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society is organising its first ever IHL Summer School in Lviv (17th-21st July) aimed at Ukrainian civil servants and IHL practitioners, with the support of the British Red Cross and the Danish Red Cross.

UK dialogue on localisation. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) is convening a country dialogue on localisation on 7 September 2023, co-hosted with the British Red Cross (BRC) and CAFOD. This will be an opportunity to reflect on and inform FCDO's internal and international approach to localisation, and in Ukraine URCS has been selected as the lead local organisation to help facilitate and contribute to the dialogue.

Further information

If you have questions, would like to be signed up to the quarterly digest, or if you would like to get in touch, please email international@redcross.org.ua

