

# Effective emergency preparedness

Ukrainian emergency management personnel protect the population effectively using modern equipment and new know-how



## The challenge: Inadequate protection in emergencies

Since the beginning of 2014, the population of Eastern Ukraine has had to live with armed conflict between Ukrainian forces and pro-Russian separatists. Around four million Ukrainians are affected by the conflict; more than 1.5 million people have fled their homes.

The resources of the Ukrainian municipalities and communities have been and still are overstretched in trying to host and care for these people. The provision of public services in particular has been very inadequate in the past. This includes the protection of the population and the provision of supplies and services in the event of an emergency, for which the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) – which includes the fire service as well as the disaster relief and rescue services – and the Ukrainian Red Cross, are responsible. A shortage of funds, obsolete organisational structures, and outdated and defective technical equipment have led to rescue workers often being unable to respond quickly enough, resulting in a high number of casualties. In addition, rescue workers themselves have been exposed to high risks during rescue operations due to a lack of adequate protective equipment such as helmets, safety shoes and breathing apparatus.

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<b>Lead executing agency:</b>	State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU)
<b>National partners:</b>	State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU), Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS), Local municipal authorities, Kyiv's municipal disaster and rescue service (KARS)
<b>Project region:</b>	Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia, Ukrainian controlled areas of Luhansk and Donetsk regions, City of Kyiv
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The Ukrainian emergency management warehouses and storage systems were also outdated: At the beginning of the crisis in eastern Ukraine, it was difficult to procure, store and distribute relief supplies and to maintain the drinking water and power supply in the settlements for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

## Our approach: Equipping rescue workers for emergencies

In 2015, the German Government launched the “Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine (IIPU)” to help municipalities and communities in Eastern Ukraine deal with the consequences of the conflict. In the context of this programme, GIZ is supporting the key actors of Ukraine’s emergency management system, particularly in Kyiv, in the regions Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaporizhia and in the areas of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions controlled by the Ukrainian Government. A large number of IDPs were seeking shelter in the villages and towns in these regions. Like the resident population, they benefit from the improved capacity of SESU and the Ukrainian Red Cross.



Ukrainian forces engaged in technical training with German experts

Ukraine's emergency management system has great potential: the rescue workers are motivated and able to work under considerable pressure. GIZ is harnessing this potential and organising training for them. German experts – mostly practitioners – from fire services and the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) are teaching Ukrainian staff modern rescue techniques, the proper use of new equipment and how to handle search and rescue dogs. In cooperation with the Ukrainian partners, the German trainers are developing viable new structures to help promote the current decentralisation process in Ukraine's emergency management system: On the basis of international standards, procedures are being developed for civil protection and disaster relief and for cooperation with volunteers, for example. In addition, GIZ is equipping the emergency management services with ambulances, rescue vehicles and thousands of new items of equipment. These additional resources are increasing the effectiveness of emergency preparedness services, enabling them to provide effective emergency management and hence better protection for the entire population.



Training with the German company Draeger for the professional use of respiratory masks

## Our results: Considerably less casualties

During the first two years of the project, almost 150 SESU units in 120 municipalities received new equipment: SESU received 2,000 sets of breathing apparatus, 5,500 full face masks, 3,500 personal protective suits, 240 km of fire hoses, 50 water pumps, 12 robust ambulances and 1,500 sets of firefighter gloves, boots and helmets. As a result, considerably more than 5,000 rescue workers can now work more safely and effectively. Since the project began, training sessions, training drills and delegation trips have been held to teach around 700 rescue workers more about locating injured people, handling rescue and therapy dogs and using methods for rescuing at heights. By introducing innovative new methodological approaches, for example a rapid intervention concept to rescue traffic accident victims, the range of situations that the Ukrainian side can deal with has been extended considerably. The benefits for the population are obvious: IDPs and residents in the host communities and beyond benefit from better access to emergency medical care; the average number of fire casualties per year has already been reduced by around 30 per cent since the beginning of the project.



Emergency response is being trained with specially made Rapid-Response-Vehicles



### Serhii Yakushin: „Now we can perform our work professionally“

A renovated fire and rescue station in Kharkiv was opened in August 2017. Forty firefighters responsible for protecting 75,000 inhabitants in the city and surrounding areas work in the fire station. At least nine of them are on duty at any one time. They can now work more effectively with a new command and control centre, a modern vehicle depot and a newly equipped training tower. The new roof and energy-efficient heating system will reduce the operating costs by 80 per cent. Serhii Yakushin, Section Commander, explained the advantages:

*„We received today modern protective firefighting uniforms that enable us to perform our duties of extinguishing and fighting fires fast and efficiently. We also acquired new helmets and firefighting footwear – protective equipment essential for our daily work. Built in 1970, our fire rescue station no longer met modern requirements. Now it is renovated and has new ventilation and heating systems, making it possible for us to respond quickly to emergency calls and to perform our duties professionally.“*

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