



ANNUAL REPORT



2018



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R2P's President

2018 wasn't an easy year for Ukrainian Society as there was social fatigue from political and economic instability. In addition, no effective mechanisms have been proposed or implemented that would ensure the realization of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine to citizens affected by the conflict in Donbas. Therefore, the main objective of the CF 'The Right to Protection' (R2P), as one of the largest Ukrainian human rights organizations, was to do anything to make these peoples' voice heard – both at the community level and at the level of the relevant authorities and agencies.

That's why we have been actively working at the entry/exit checkpoints during this period. We've presented and shared the results of our work, expert opinions and related recommendations to the relevant state bodies. Our legal team has also provided legal assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) who needed consultations, assistance, or representation in courts.

In 2018 our lawyers won a model case on IDP pension suspension and resumption. Therefore, this decision must now be used by all administrative courts in Ukraine when considering similar cases.

In addition, we continued to fight steadily for the rights of stateless persons and children without birth registration. We helped 55 individuals obtain passports for the first time in their lives. We've shared our stateless experience of working with stateless persons with free legal aid centers and administrations of penitentiary institutions to increase their capacity to provide legal assistance to undocumented people. We have also advocated for the adoption of a procedure of stateless person recognition, involving the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations in this process.

Also in 2018 we started working with the most active refugee community representatives. We informed them about their rights and responsibilities in Ukraine and improve their ability to integrate into Ukrainian society. Paralegals trained by R2P passed on their knowledge to their fellow citizens.

Within the framework of the project 'Legal Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ukraine', we also trained representatives of state agencies, including the State Migration Service, the State Border Guard Service, administrative courts, state attorneys, and lawyers. As a result of a comprehensive approach that included direct legal assistance, training for refugee communities and representatives of the state, we have remarkable results.

THREE MAJOR CATEGORIES OF VULNERABLE BENEFICIARIES



Displacement related

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are persons who have fled their homes in Donbas, East Ukraine, and Crimea starting from 2014. There are approximately 1.4 million registered IDPs in Ukraine.

Conflict-affected persons are persons who live close to or within the conflict zone in Donbas. They could be residing in government-controlled areas, close to the line of contact, or in non government-controlled areas (NGCA). There are approximately 5 million conflict-affected persons in Ukraine.



Migration related

Asylum seekers are people seeking international protection outside of their home country due to war, persecution, or violence. Their claim for asylum has not been fully determined yet. There are approximately 6,000 asylum seekers in Ukraine.

Refugees are people whose claims for asylum have been definitively recognized. There are approximately 3,000 recognized refugees and complementary protection holders in Ukraine.



Citizenship related

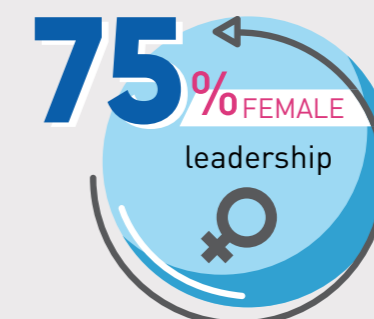
Stateless people are people who are not considered a national of any country. In Ukraine, these people are primarily elderly persons who never traded in their Soviet passports, as well as their children, Roma, and stateless migrants. Unemployment among the stateless is much higher than among Ukrainian citizens. They are also overrepresented in the prison population. There are approximately 75,000 stateless persons or persons at risk of statelessness in Ukraine.

Undocumented refers to a person who may or may not be stateless but is without the documentation to assert their nationality.

Person at risk of statelessness is someone who potentially has citizenship, but cannot confirm it. The primary people at risk of statelessness in Ukraine are the 40,000 children born in the NGCA since the conflict began, who never received Ukrainian birth certificates.



ABOUT US



Our mission

Right to Protection (R2P) changes the rules of the game between “the system” and the individual to bring about human dignity and safety.



Our vision

R2P is a leading development actor and a platform for civil society collective efforts for safe and dignified lives of beneficiaries and those in need.



Worth of the human person

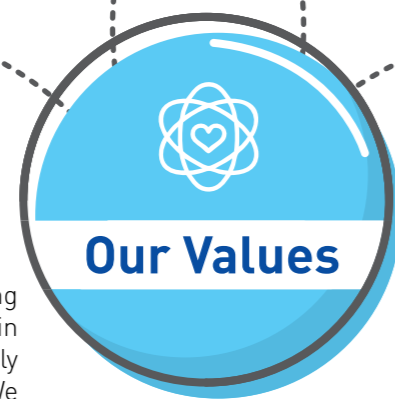
Humanity the highest value for us. Our activities are directed at community development. Dignified life is respect for individuals, freedom and equality. Tolerance and openness are the foundations of our interactions with beneficiaries.

Reliability

People rely on us because we are responsible and passionate. We are honest and transparent with our beneficiaries, partners and colleagues. We build our relationships on mutual trust strengthened by experience and professionalism. We objectively assess each client's situation.

Constant development

By developing our skills we are helping others. We aspire to become a leader in our activities. That is why we constantly improve our skills and innovate. We promote qualitative systematic changes in the state and in society so people can live safe and dignified lives.



Professionalism

Everything we do, we do professionally. In our organization, everyone is an expert in his field and strives to develop. We adhere to professional ethics and implement the highest standards of organizational and programmatic management.



R2P became a member of the Ukraine Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), comprised of the leading UN agencies, international NGOs, and Ukrainian civil society members who deal with the consequences of the conflict and provide assistance to IDPs and conflict-affected populations. R2P brings to the HCT its protection expertise and serves to amplify the voice of Ukrainian civil society.



Won a landmark victory in the Supreme Court in a model case on IDP access to pensions. The Supreme Court ruled the suspension of an IDP's pension was illegal and obliged the Pension Fund to pay the pension debts. The decision in the model case simplifies and unifies court practice in all subsequent pension cases. This ruling contributed to the Government of Ukraine withdrawing the controversial Cabinet of Ministers Resolution #365. Resolution #365 required residents of and those displaced from the NGCA to register as IDPs to receive their pensions and social benefits. In effect, it created massive obstacles for over a million of Ukraine's citizens conflict-affected citizens instead to receive their only sources of income.



Advocacy efforts contributed to an improved final version of the Reintegration of Donbas law which was passed in February 2018. A notable improvement advocated for and included in the final text was the removal of a provision that would have required humanitarian actors working in Donbas to become accredited with the Joint-Forces Operations commanders.

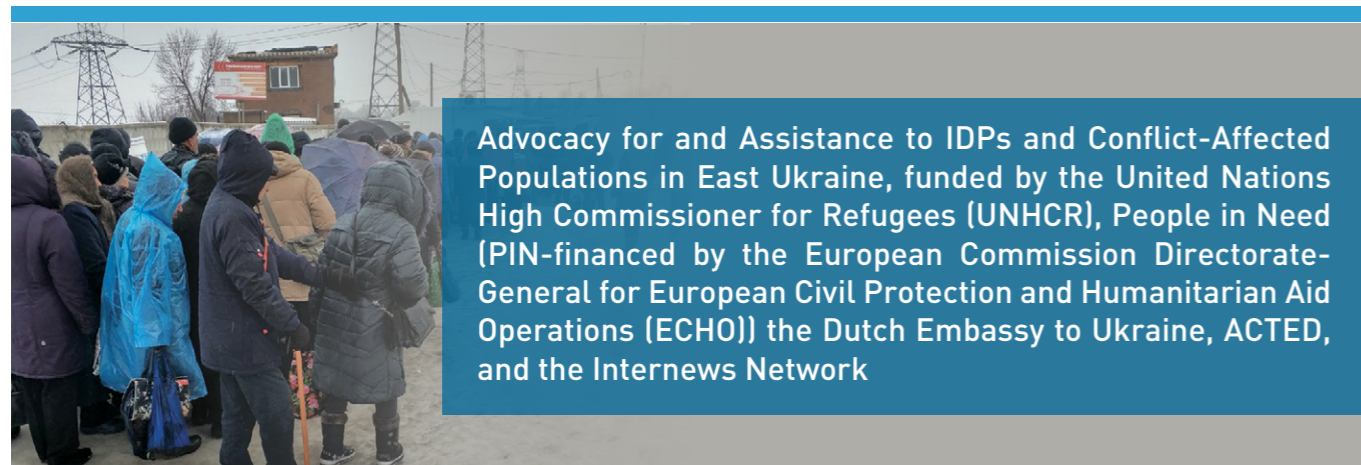


Contributed to an amendment of Cabinet of Ministers Resolution #1085 to allow for people displaced from or within 46 additional contact line towns to receive targeted government IDP assistance.



Began helping refugees and asylum seekers integrate into Ukrainian society by advocating for asylum seekers' access to the labor market, job placement assistance, and marshalling business community support for employment of refugees and asylum seekers.

2018 PROJECTS



Advocacy for and Assistance to IDPs and Conflict-Affected Populations in East Ukraine, funded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), People in Need (PIN-financed by the European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)) the Dutch Embassy to Ukraine, ACTED, and the Internews Network

- 98,166 people assessed on their needs and experiences during 5,123 monitoring visits to 566 unique locations, including 226 locations along the contact line.
- 35,856 IDPs and conflict-affected persons received legal and/or protection assistance.
 - 20,476 IDPs and conflict-affected persons received 26,467 instances of legal assistance, including 4,021 instances of secondary legal assistance and 2,216 court cases, with a favorable ruling in 98% (1,322) of all finalized cases.
 - 24,624 IDPs and conflict-affected persons received consultations on protection issues.
- 721 successful strategic case judgements at various levels of Ukraine's court system on issues including reinstatement of pensions suspended per Cabinet of Ministers Resolution #365, social payments and pension access, enforcement of judgements, former IDPs, and damaged or destroyed housing, land and property (HLP).
- 321 group legal awareness and counseling sessions resulted in 5,965 people becoming more conscious of their rights and how to realize them.
- 89 national advocacy initiatives were undertaken which improved social and economic rights, freedom of movement, HLP, softened the final law on reintegration of Donbas, and enhanced access to pensions social payments, and documentation.
- 180 local advocacy initiatives were undertaken that improved basic protection conditions.
- Regular monitoring the conditions of and reason for crossing at all 5 entry-exit checkpoints to the NGCA (EECPs). There are over 1 million crossings every month. National and local advocacy targeting key stakeholders about the poor conditions at the EECPs and the improvements required contributed to the EECP facilities undergoing major renovations, dramatically improving crossing conditions.

- Advocacy on the rights of children resulted in a simplified procedure for children to obtain conflict-affected child status.
- R2P continually provided systematic evidence-based analysis to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) working groups and embassies involved with the Minsk process to ensure the most urgent issues affecting IDPs and conflict-affected populations were discussed at high-level negotiations.
- Advocacy focused extensively on improving physical identification of IDPs at Oshchadbank, which is one of the many procedures IDPs must undergo to obtain their pensions and social benefits. As a result of R2P's monitoring and advocacy, instances of Oshchadbank employees illegally upselling IDPs during the process fell dramatically by the end of the year.



Capacity building IDP coalitions funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)

- As a result of the project 'Capacity Building of Grassroots Community-Organizations' across East Ukraine and grantmaking, 5 new IDP civil society platforms were formed to solve problems in their new local host communities.
- 90 grassroots civil society activists had their programmatic and institutional capacities enhanced through project training on development of internal policies, fundraising, strategy development, organisational and financial management, and more. Supported coalitions are still active in their communities and 40% are in the process of obtaining funding for new projects from international and local budgets, while an additional grantee has implemented a new project.
- 75% of grassroots community based organization grantees from the 2017 cohort remain active and have become leaders in their host communities.



Research on Human Security and Conflict in Ukraine in partnership with Leiden University, Carnegie Europe and the Ukrainian Institute for Public Policy the Netherlands Institute for World Research (WOTRO)

- R2P undertook field and desk research on IDP integration efforts by local authorities in Odesa, Kharkiv, and Donbas. The project provided authorities at the central and local levels with a toolkit on how to improve social adaptation of IDPs in their new communities.



Advocacy for and Legal Assistance to the Stateless Population in Ukraine funded by UNHCR

- 429 people including 286 new beneficiaries received legal assistance. Despite major bureaucratic and legal limitations, R2P managed to obtain 55 passports, 72 birth certificates, including 45 duplicate birth certificates for adults and 27 birth certificates for children whose parents could not previously register the birth.
- 84 government officials became better able to provide counseling on statelessness issues after undergoing their first trainings.
- The programme continuously advocated for Ukraine to adopt a statelessness determination procedure (SDP) in line with its international obligations under the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954) and Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961), as ratified in 2013. As a result of R2P's advocacy, a draft law requiring SDP development was registered by Parliament in September 2018.



Legal Assistance to Refugees and Asylum Seekers funded by UNHCR


- 1,638 refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war and/or persecution were provided with legal assistance on asylum issues, including 671 newcomers and 41 unaccompanied minors.
- Through project trainings, 109 free legal aid center staff and 63 judges became more able and excited to assist with or adjudicate refugee and asylum seeker issues.
- As a direct result of scaled up and expanded cooperation with the Ombudsman's office as outlined in a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), R2P regained the opportunity to visit and provide legal assistance to beneficiaries stuck in airport transit areas and other places of detention. As a result, R2P gained access to 16 people stuck in the transit zone it otherwise would not have had access to. The MoU also provides an opportunity to strengthen actions to protect the rights of all beneficiaries and to jointly advocate for amendments to national legislation.
- R2P began advocating for Ukraine's medical reform to include asylum seeker access to free medical services. Consequently, it gained entry to the Ministry of Health Working Group on Prevention of Infectious Diseases, which will serve as a platform for continued efforts to improve beneficiaries' access to medical services and treatment.


Paralegal Training and Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers funded by UNHCR and Open Society Foundation (OSF)


- 37 informal leaders of the Afghani, Arabic speaking (Syrian and Iraqi), French speaking (Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Guinean), Russian speaking (Russian, Uzbek, and Tajiki), and Somali refugee communities in Kyiv and Kharkiv became legal aid first responders in their communities after undergoing a series of extensive paralegal trainings.
- 219 refugees and asylum seekers became more integrated into Ukrainian society by receiving job placement assistance, learning about employment and cultural norms in their new home and/or receiving legal assistance on documentation and financial matters.
- Approximately 450 refugee and asylum seeker skillsets were analyzed in relation to the needs of approximately 200 companies operating in Kyiv and Kharkiv in order to match job seekers more intelligently with potential employers. The analysis showed there is unmet demand for drivers, accountants, machine operators and sales managers, and that companies are generally willing to hire refugees and asylum seekers if they are qualified.
- Began extensive outreach to the business community on how to employ refugees and asylum seekers and created a groundswell of support for their employment. A major barrier is that asylum seekers have minimal access to the labor market. As such, in 2018, R2P continually advocated for the Ukrainian government to allow asylees to work legally while undergoing the years long asylum process.



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