



“WE HAD DIFFICULTIES IN HOW TO CONDUCT PLANNED OPERATIONS OR PROCEED WITH EMERGENCIES.

WE USUALLY COULD ADVISE TO GO TO THE OTHER LOCATIONS (CITIES OR KYIV) TO CONDUCT NECESSARY EXAMINATION ON EQUIPMENT THAT IS AVAILABLE ONLY THERE. EVEN ADVICE TO GO TO THE CITY WAS DANGEROUS OR NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE OF LACK OF PETROL, LACK OF TRANSPORT AT ALL, MINED ROADS, ETC.

AT THE SAME TIME, LOCAL FELDSHERS STARTED TO DO WHATEVER WAS POSSIBLE, EVEN SO, WE ALL HAD ISSUES WITH SALARY RECEIVING AND OR OTHER USUAL ISSUES AFTER SOME CHANGES IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WERE PROVIDED NOT A LONG TIME AGO BEFORE THE CONFLICT ESCALATED.”

*Healthcare Specialist,  
Ukraine*





# Volunteer, Ukraine.

*"I have marked that a lot of people don't understand that it is crucial to cling to the usual routines that you had before to keep a link with the reality. Before the full-scale war, I had a daily routine in the morning such as going to the shower, doing makeup, and having a coffee. I have continued that even when the shellings started, and I was just staying at home and had no need to go somewhere. I even didn't have an idea what for I do this. I was joking that continuing to do so is needed for my corpse to be good-looking and with nice makeup when the house would have collapsed after the attack. But one of our psychologists at work then explained my brain needed to have a link with the life I had before, and it is an important thing to do. But it is still really frightening when the shelling starts, and you are naked in the shower... we with my friends still consider that one of the biggest fears to meet a rocket while we are in the shower."*





## Volunteer, Ukraine.

*"Some recommendations claim that you need to go out of your comfort zone. Guys, I think someone once told it, but you get it wrong. I am doing unpleasant things to finally find myself in my comfort zone. I am not a Jesus to suffer. So, I am trying to make my daily routines as comfortable as possible."*



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## Volunteer, Ukraine.

*“My social battery is now quite low and quicker reaches her low, so it’s hard for me to support regular prolonged communication. And now when people don’t understand that I do leave them easier. It is now much more pleasant to observe ducks in the river close to my house, seeing how their ducklings live their life listening to the pleasant music in the earphones.”*



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# Volunteer, Ukraine.

*“People with different life views – it is now even more easier to let them go. I don’t have enough inner resources to understand them and use additional efforts to talk about different values or opinions that we have.”*



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## Volunteer, Ukraine.

*“When the war started, I recognized that I could stay without a sleep for almost one week, because of the shellings, and still to function. It was also a new thing to me that I can work a lot and still function. Before the war I thought of myself as an owl type of person (note: in the meaning of the chronotype, going to sleep and waking up late), I had my own business and could appear in the office around 11 am. But now I know that I can wake up at 7 am and start to work at 8 am and it’s not dog-tired. Also, I have discovered that I can work in English for the whole day, which is also ok, even though it’s a foreign language for me. Also, I have found out that I can work with such different types of people in one place. I mean with different backgrounds, experiences, spheres, etc. in one place with almost the same work conditions.”*





## Helper, Ukraine.

*“That was the first time for me to see an organization with such a structure. Usually in Ukraine, we have it differently. It is important to see the management functioning of such a type. For example, here I have learned how to delegate tasks and it is interesting to discover it all in general. I will probably implement this kind of management afterward in the future.”*





## Helper, Ukraine.

*"I have changed a few workplaces in NGOs and it is good to see that in the current one, we have a special officer whose work is to help our beneficiaries register to the different social support programs. This person is aware of all of these paperwork which is truly useful."*







## Helper, Ukraine.

*"I would like to go somewhere, in some other location I mean, to have rest. I am tired of these local landscapes. And here in Kharkiv we don't have McDonalds functioning due to security reasons, so I would like just to eat some food from it as it was in peaceful times. In general, I don't plan my days now."*





## Helper, Ukraine.

*"I have only one note in my planner "March 22, 2022 – What's next?" It is hard for me to read and learn something new. I have a book with 120 pages, and I have read only a half in a few months. That's incredibly slow in comparison with my usual tempo. I would like to buy a robot vacuum cleaner for my parents. All of these plans are short-term. I was trying to plan a vacation in autumn, but we can't buy railway tickets earlier than 3 weeks for internal trips and to Poland – only before 2 weeks. So how can I plan something even in the middle-term perspective? I am even not sure what I will eat tomorrow."*



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## Helper, Ukraine.

*"I think war will last one more year, but that is a year of my life. And I am not about to become younger, so it's sad. Starting from the coronavirus pandemic it is already almost 4 years of my life in that."*





## Helper, Ukraine.

*“When at one moment you understand it is not this life (note: in the meaning war mediated) or that life (note: in the meaning before full-scale invasion) you can then actually find a link and can continue living now. It will be with us for a long time, so we have to live now also, not somehow later – now. Maybe that’s in a different understanding than before, then we have to create a new one. But now.”*





20 years ago I worked with a similar group, which, like the Ukrainian refugees, hadn't had their basic needs met and lived in hotels, under very poor conditions. I was re-traumatized when I encountered the similar poor condition in the hotel, where the Ukrainian refugees were staying (e.g. problem with electricity in the building, snakes in the yard of the hotel, etc.). It took me considerable time to process my difficult emotions and reemerging memories.

Helper, Georgia



when I return home from my  
clinets, I feel guilty for having  
home, for having the  
possibility to communicate  
with my son, while some of  
my beneficiaries are deprived  
of all of that.

Helper, Georgia



**I burst into tears, while the whole group of female beneficiaries were crying. I felt very uncomfortable as I was not sure whether my tears were interpreted as a sign of empathy or of weakness by my beneficiaries.**

Helper, Georgia



**I felt extremely powerless and very badly myself when beneficiaries with health problems, who could not afford a doctor, asked for help. Among them were elderly people with chronic diseases, a child with a broken leg, etc.**

Volunteer, Georgia





Patients expressed excessive anger and critique towards Georgians and Georgia. I had similar encounters with Ukrainian colleagues. I got distraught and it almost caused me to reciprocate anger.

Later, with the help of a supervisor, therapy and support groups, I managed to contain this anger, but at first it was quite difficult for me.

Helper, Georgia



I am quite an experienced psychotherapist, and I remember the case I had never experienced before.

These were remote consultations with people who were living in cities that were being bombed.

Once, completely unexpectedly, my patient joined our online session from the bunker /shelter and that was a very confusing and stressful experience for me.

Psychologist, Georgia



I felt terribly and had negative emotions practically every day in the first phase of the crisis. Listening to the stories of the refugees caused the most difficult feelings. Sometimes I saw clearly with my own eyes traces of the events that these people went through. Children came to the headquarters wearing house slippers, which was very hard to watch, considering the low temperature and the distance they had walked. I will never forget the story when a woman came to the headquarters with a bullet-riddled car and children, whose parents died on the way.

Self-organized volunteer. Georgia

“The work was very intensive, at the same time quite diverse. It was very hard especially at the beginning: you see soldiers, seriously wounded, parents, who are hopeless. It was very hard and the problems were very diverse. At the beginning you deal with immediate problems, while at later stages, when the situation is settled down, you deal with more in-depth problems, with the long-term consequences”.

Psychologist , Armenia



“Our team was among the first ones to provide immediate psychological support as a result of the military conflict on September 2020. We worked directly in the hospitals. We did not know where we are going, what we are dealing with. There was no time to prepare, it was just time for action”.

Psychologist , Armenia



“One of the challenges for me is that sometimes people have this stereotypical thinking that if you are a psychologist, then you should not have any emotions, everything should be under strict control, which is not true. We are all humans”.

MHPSS Worker, Armenia



“People sometimes may perceive psychologists as superheroes, but in fact, we are all humans, we have our own emotions. If they notice a psychologist being emotional, or showing emotions, they might think that it’s a matter of low level of professionalism”.

Psychologist, Armenia



“The only thing our community did was hanging announcements about shelters, however it was so unclear, that it could be hardly understandable. I wish they were engaged in more meaningful activities. They could have done some activities to inform and prepare the community”.

Volunteer, Armenia





“It’s a pity that currently people do not recognize the seriousness of the situation and have such a poor awareness about safety behaviours during military conflicts. We had cases when children were playing near explosive remnants of the war, and parents were comfortable with that”.

Volunteer, Armenia



“For me spending some time reflecting on my own feeling and emotions is a very effective way to understand what’s going on and to better manage stress. Most of the time you are busy with helping others, and you may forget about yourself. It’s very important to allocate some time to think about yourself, to do things that you enjoy”.

Psychologist, Armenia



“I think it is very important to have supportive supervision in place for the social workers and psychologists. For example, as a professional you might be seriously affected emotionally, and as a result be unable to effectively provide professional support. However, if there is supportive supervision in place, you are able to discuss the case with someone else and find more effective approaches to address the case”.

Social Worker, Armenia



“We also need professional group discussions, even this event has some therapeutic effect on us. Having some small group meetings, discussing our common issues and challenges, bringing up some suggestions would be very helpful”.

Psychologist, Armenia



“I practice saying “No” to certain situations. I am sometimes guided by the principle of “when you say no to others, you say yes to yourself.” Of course, I don’t mean being egocentric, this is just about having certain boundaries”.

Psychologist, Armenia



“My work time and personal time are separated. I don’t imagine working during my personal time anymore. And I came to this separation after the war.”

Psychologist, Armenia



“I try to be honest in my feelings. If I am sad, that’s ok, I try to accept that. It’s not mandatory to feel happy all the time, I let myself feel sad. I then reflect on my feelings”.

MHPSS Worker, Armenia



“I could not sleep for weeks, I was hearing the sound of explosions in my ears all the time, and up until now, I see either a war in my dreams, or explosions”.

Volunteer , Armenia

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“When you see a person in need, and your professional background allows you to help, that’s already an asset to feel useful”.

Helper , Armenia

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“As we grow as professionals,  
we also become more  
resilient, more tolerant, more  
flexible and this affects us  
personally, too”.

Psychologist , Armenia

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“Another motivating factor is the environment where I work, the people I work with, the people provide professional support to.”

Psychologist , Armenia

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“I feel motivated when I see that the organization I work in results in changes, and you are a part of that change. It’s a big motivation when you realize that you can be a helper directly and indirectly on a daily basis”.

Psychologist , Armenia

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“I am highly motivated by the [borderline] community members. It’s a completely different environment, and completely different feelings. I can’t compare the gratitude I received from the community members of one of the borderline communities to anything else. The fact that I know they exists, and that we helped them, is a huge motivation for me”.

Psychologist , Armenia



“We are not the same people, the same professionals anymore, if we compare us before and after the armed conflict. Our perceptions and viewpoints have entirely changed”.

Psychologist , Armenia

