ADAPTIVE INNOVATION IN THE UKRAINE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE: HOW CONTEXT, LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS MATTER

A case study from Ukraine for the Global Prioritisation Exercise for Humanitarian Research and Innovation

Nigel Timmins and Anton Shevchenko

April 2023

ABOUT ELRHA

We are Elrha. A global organisation that finds solutions to complex humanitarian problems through research and innovation.

We are an established actor in the humanitarian community, working in partnership with humanitarian organisations, researchers, innovators, and the private sector to tackle some of the most difficult challenges facing people all over the world. We equip humanitarian responders with knowledge of what works, so that people affected by crises get the right help when they need it most. We have supported more than 200 world-class research studies and innovation projects, championing new ideas and different approaches to evidence what works in humanitarian response. Elrha has two successful humanitarian programmes: Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) and the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF), and leads the Global Prioritisation Exercise (GPE).

About the Global Prioritisation Exercise (GPE) for Humanitarian Research and Innovation

The GPE aims to improve outcomes for people affected by crisis by amplifying the impact of investments in research and innovation through understanding the priorities at all levels. It will provide an overview of the progress and performance of the humanitarian research and innovation ecosystem with a clear set of priorities for research and innovation funding and attention.

r2hc Research for health in humanitarian crises | elrha

The R2HC aims to improve health outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises by strengthening the evidence base for public health interventions. Our globally-recognised research programme focuses on maximising the potential for public health research to bring about positive change and transform the effectiveness of humanitarian response.

HIF Humanitarian innovation fund | elrha

The HIF aims to improve outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises by identifying, nurturing and sharing more effective and scalable solutions. The HIF is our globally-recognised programme leading on the development and testing of innovation in the humanitarian system. Established in 2011, it was the first of its kind: an independent, grant-making programme open to the entire humanitarian community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to extend our thanks to the organisations and individuals who shared their time and their perspectives to help inform this report.

The authors would like to acknowledge Ziad Issa and Larina Fernandez for their support throughout the research and production of this report.

We would also like to thank the Global Prioritisation Exercise's funders, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the GPE's Reference Group for their expert advice.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Citation: Timmins, N. and Shevchenko, A. (2023). Adaptive Innovation in the Ukraine Humanitarian Response: How Context, Leadership and Partnerships Matter. A case study from Ukraine for the Global Prioritisation Exercise for Humanitarian Research and Innovation. London: Elrha.

ISBN Number: 978-1-7398446-6-0

© Elrha 2023. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons AttributionNonCommercialNoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

Designed by Blue Stag.

CONTENTS

Executive summary	5
Chapter 1: Introduction	8
Chapter 2: Methodology	11
Chapter 3: Findings	13
Chapter 4: Conclusions	26
Chapter 5: Recommendations	30
References	32
Interviewees	35
Appendix A – Summary descriptions of innovations	37

Executive summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Russian re-invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 caused a massive humanitarian emergency, with an estimated 17.7 million people in urgent need of humanitarian aid.

Our Global Prioritisation Exercise (GPE) for Humanitarian Research and Innovation aims to improve outcomes for people affected by crises by amplifying the impact of investments in research and innovation, and understanding the priorities at all levels. This case study is part of the GPE. It involved interviewing 33 key informants to gain a picture of how the humanitarian community has used and engaged with research, evidence and innovation in the first year of the response to the crisis in Ukraine.

The early stages of the crisis were characterised by the massive scaling-up effort required and great uncertainty as to how the war might unfold. Ukraine was a new country of operation for most international humanitarian agencies. It was also a new context for Ukrainian organisations, as the invasion had profound impacts at all levels of Ukrainian life. Most international agencies were unprepared for this, including those that had been present since 2014, when Russia first invaded and seized control of Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine.

In the highly fluid situation of 2022, the innovation that took place was largely 'adaptive', building on work developed and tested in other humanitarian settings. Of particular note was the level of digitalisation within Ukraine. This enabled many organisations to incorporate a much higher level of digitalisation into their programming. It included online self-registration for cash programmes through to chatbots, QR codes and augmented reality as tools for communication, accountability and awareness-raising. Objectively this might be considered adaptive programming, rather than wholly original invention adaptation, but it still often represented a significant leap for the organisations involved. In many cases, internal rules and procedures acted as brakes on innovation by limiting risk-taking. Senior, trusted leaders were required to get the necessary organisational buy-in to take the risks that any new way of working requires. The visibility of the Ukraine crisis helped in gaining senior leadership attention on the programming challenges.

Nearly all innovations were born of collaborations, often stemming from established and trusted partnerships. Private sector organisations seemed more agile at pivoting their work to meet emergent needs, but these required funding from humanitarian donors to sustain their engagement.

Other examples of innovation tended to reflect either the introduction of new technology, particularly in the health sector, or new mechanisms for managing micro-grants among those agencies supporting a Ukrainian-led response. Again, collaboration and trusted partnerships were key to the success of these efforts.

Ukrainian research bodies have found it difficult to connect effectively with the international humanitarian sector. This seems partly because of a lack of relationship between the two, which the coordination structures have not been able to resolve, focused as they are on coordinating the very significant operational humanitarian response. A role that clusters could play is to identify key research questions which would then act as focus points for agencies interested in contributing to solving that particular question. A related consideration is that Ukrainian research bodies often concentrate on long-term issues, such as the recovery or environmental impacts of the war, which many humanitarian agencies do not see as within their mandate. Further hurdles are often the due diligence requirements of international agencies when passing on funding, or the experience needed by their partners in how to manage their grants. In order to see greater localisation and engagement with Ukrainian research entities, humanitarian agencies need to have more adaptive internal systems and procedures able to adjust so as to be appropriate for the context.

This case study is not a systematic study, but it offers good anecdotal evidence of significant innovation that is taking place within a hugely demanding response context. There is less evidence of original research, but that is unsurprising at this stage in a humanitarian response.

It will be critical that any recovery processes are Ukrainian-led and informed by Ukrainian research. International agencies should invest in the relationships, collaborations and administrative mechanisms to make working with Ukrainian research organisations possible. In due course, the many advances made in the Ukraine humanitarian response will inform humanitarian responses of the future.

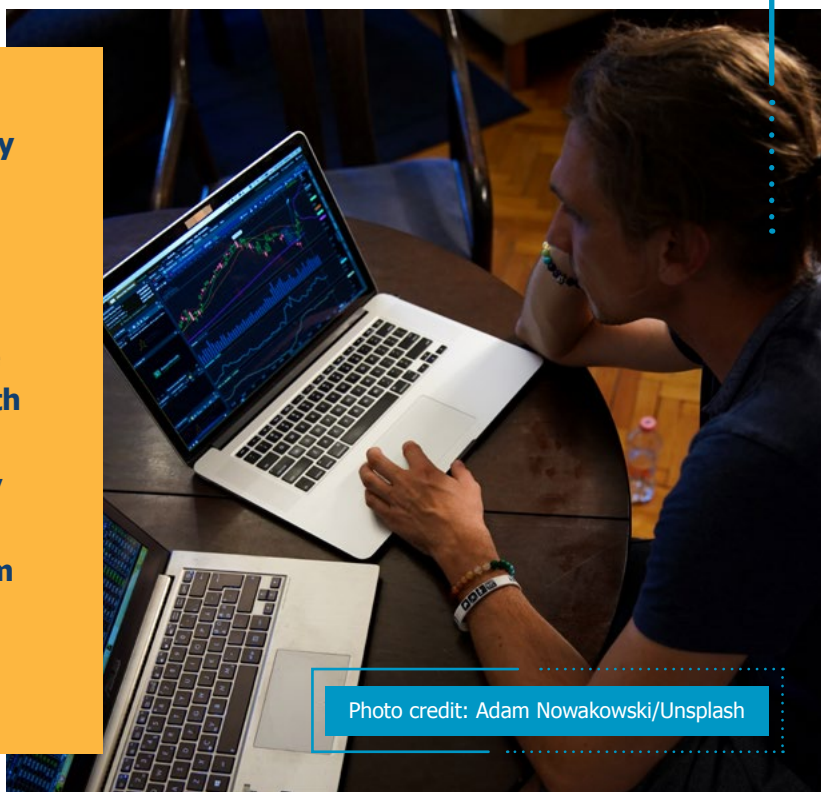


Photo credit: Adam Nowakowski/Unsplash

1 Introduction

INTRODUCTION

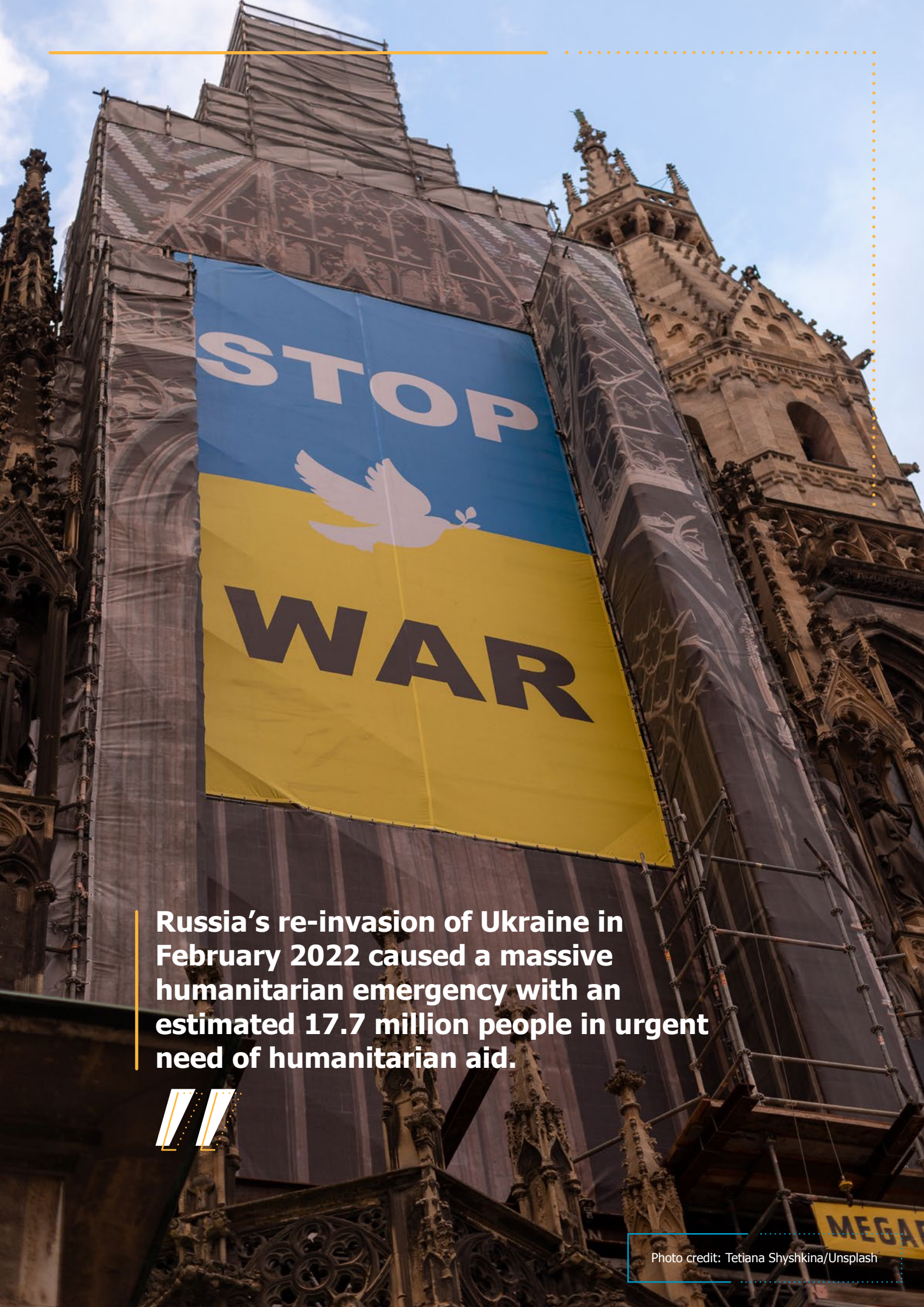
Russia's re-invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 caused a massive humanitarian emergency with an estimated 17.7 million people in urgent need of humanitarian aid.[1] A significant humanitarian response was established in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries by the United Nations, Red Cross Movement and numerous international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) with significant institutional funding and funding from public appeals. But the largest and fastest response was established by Ukrainian organisations,[2] including the government of Ukraine, national and local civil society organisations, faith groups, municipalities and emerging volunteer networks.

Our Global Prioritisation Exercise for Humanitarian Research and Innovation (GPE) aims to improve outcomes for people affected by crises by amplifying the impact of investments in research and innovation, and understanding the priorities at all levels. This case study looks at how the humanitarian community has used and engaged with research, evidence and innovation in the first year of the humanitarian response to the Ukrainian crisis. It has been a time of significant scaling up and uncertainty. Ukraine was a new country of operation for most international humanitarian agencies, and for Ukrainian organisations this was a new context, as the invasion had profound impacts on all aspects of Ukrainian life.

Prior to the February 2022 invasion, the Ukrainian government had been implementing a number of reforms over the previous nine years that shaped the context in which the humanitarian response occurred. The reforms focused primarily on building the rule of law and a market economy-based democracy, integrated within the Euro-Atlantic region, to access the economic benefits of globalisation. In 2014 the country signed a European Union–Ukraine Association Agreement, and in June 2022 it attained an EU candidate status.

Of significance for many of the innovations that emerged was the digitalisation reform launched in 2019 by the government of Ukraine as a means to reduce corruption and develop the digital economy. The digitalisation goals included improving access to services by vulnerable citizens, such as people living with disability, older persons and residents in remote rural areas[3] as well as residents of the Donbas and Crimea, which had been under Russian occupation since 2014. The reform was known as a 'barrier-free society' concept.[4]

Another key policy was the decentralisation of government, promoting the transfer of powers and resources to be 'as close as possible to the constituency they serve', and encouraging local initiatives and community capacity-strengthening.[5]



Russia's re-invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 caused a massive humanitarian emergency with an estimated 17.7 million people in urgent need of humanitarian aid.

Photo credit: Tetiana Shyshkina/Unsplash

2 Methodology

METHODOLOGY

The co-authors of the report carried out the research for this case study, which involved a series of **33 semi-structured interviews** with key informants. Sampling was not systematic; the consultants contacted a range of international agencies operational in Ukraine, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and health clusters in-country, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, and national actors identified in the Disasters Emergency Committee-funded Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal Scoping Exercise[6] – they in turn suggested people to speak with. While this is not a systematic analysis of all innovation or research that has taken place, multiple perspectives were captured which painted a picture of the broad dynamics of research and innovation in the response to the Ukraine crisis.

Summaries of the innovations explored are set out in **Appendix A**.

Photo credit: Dylan Gillis/Unsplash

3 Findings

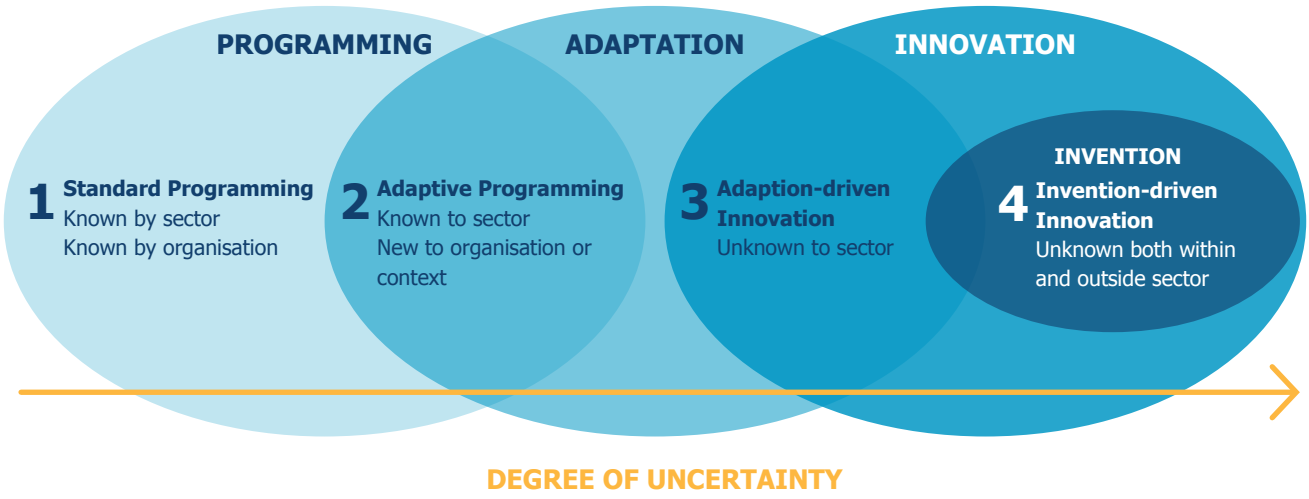
FINDINGS

3.1 Scale and types of humanitarian innovation in Ukraine

Agencies started with what they knew and built out from there: most innovation was adaptive and there was little to no invention-driven innovation.

The interviews conducted suggest characteristics in the response that align with the notion of innovation as "an iterative process that identifies, adjusts and diffuses ideas for improving humanitarian action".[7] The examples (set out below in the main text and in Appendix A) correlate well with a continuum of innovation,[8] moving from standard programming through to innovation. However, we did not find examples of invention-driven innovation unique to the Ukraine humanitarian response post-February 2022.

Figure 1. The continuum from programming to innovation



Source: Obrecht and Warner 2016

Before the Russian re-invasion in February 2022 relatively few humanitarian agencies had an active presence in Ukraine. Decreasing funding streams were also causing further retrenchment of humanitarian programming. Concurrently there was a significant development programme, and a lively discussion around the humanitarian-development nexus, particularly as Western donors wanted to support Ukraine's governance capacity and democracy. The re-invasion came as a surprise to most agencies, and the humanitarian response was consequently reactive, with a rapid scaling-up.

Many international actors established a presence in the country for the first time, with a significant scaling up of coordination capacity. The priority in the beginning was either a question of how to pivot activities given the dramatically new context, or how to establish a presence, design and scale up an appropriate programme. In the early stages of the response, it is not surprising that a majority of humanitarian action might be described as starting with **standard programming** – i.e. agencies started with what they knew and built out from there.

Even those agencies with an established presence were mostly unprepared: they found their existing staff had to relocate, and surge teams were brought in who were also unfamiliar with the context. National civil society and many in the private sector needed spontaneously to organise assistance and take on roles in humanitarian action that for most were completely new and beyond their experience. This was typically by doing what they knew and using existing assets.

Churches used buildings to offer shelter, bakeries distributed bread, laundries allowed people in displacement centres to wash clothes.

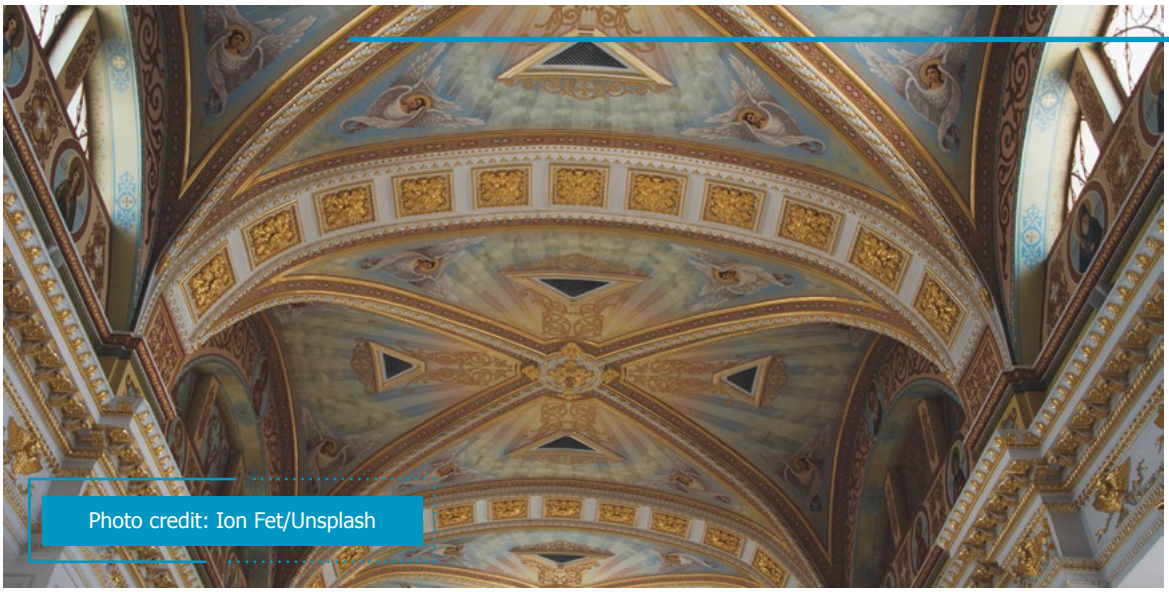


Photo credit: Ion Fet/Unsplash

From there, people quickly started on **adaptive programming**. For international organisations nearly all interviews conducted suggested that innovations were developed from initiatives trialled in multiple responses globally, over an extended period of time, and then imported to the Ukraine response. An exception was the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) medical train, which was a spontaneous innovation born of adapting to the dynamics of the conflict. Organisations, both humanitarian and non-humanitarian, sought to implement new ways of working appropriate to Ukraine's particular context, notably the high levels of digital literacy and access. For example, both UNICEF and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) introduced online self-registration to apply for cash transfer assistance. UNICEF already had in place a web-based data management system

known as HOPE, supported by USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the Danish government. However, prior to the Ukraine crisis, the registration module of HOPE was based on in-person registration or used existing household data from partners (e.g. government or NGOs). With the intention both to accelerate the speed of getting cash to households and to reach those beyond the front line who could not be accessed physically, UNICEF developed an online registration platform to allow self-registration which went live on 30 March 2022. NRC also developed an online self-registration platform in partnership with WhatsApp and Twilio. While these were adaptive innovations in the sense that cash transfer and online registration are not wholly new, both agencies had to go to significant lengths to adapt their systems to enable a self-registration approach at scale.[9] UNICEF assisted 1 million individuals, with three to four families registering per second when the system went online; NRC received 560,000 applications after a single post on Facebook linking to WhatsApp.

Some interviewees noted how their experience of working in Ukraine since the 2014 invasion was important, as it enabled further adaptation to meet the impacts of the February 2022 re-invasion. HALO Trust has been working in Ukraine since 2015 and they were able to build upon their experience of introducing remote methods of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) initially forced by the COVID-19 context in 2020–2021. The European Union Advisory Mission Ukraine (EUAM) has worked in Ukraine for a number of years and developed a range of relationships, including with the Ministry of Digital Transformation, helpful in the current work for bringing innovation into the civilian security sector.

Some private sector companies adapted their work to assist. For example, Premise, a data company, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), adapted their mobile app to help gather health information.

Particularly in the early months after the re-invasion, there was a lack of information due to security concerns. The Premise system allowed the collection of data in insecure areas about which health centres were working and what medicines they had in stock available to prescribe. The information was provided by people living in the area on their mobile phone via the Premise proprietary app. The app had originally been developed for people to sign up for tasks they could complete for which they were paid, but it was re-tooled: users with the app would be asked questions such as "do you have family members with dialysis needs?"; "does anyone in your house take heart medication and are they able to access it?"; "how much supply do they still have?". This allowed a process of data triangulation with the Ministry of Health to prioritise distributions of stock and support to those health centres.

Examples of **adaptation-driven innovation** were rarer, and typically involved the adoption of new technologies. For example, in the health sector, the social enterprise SurgiBox introduced the SurgiField system to create safe surgical environments when local facilities are not available due to remoteness, resources or destruction, with the

goal of bringing safe surgical care to the point of need. This technology evolved from a collaboration among clinicians and innovators from MSF, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Institute of Technology's DLab and EssentialTech. It was prompted by the team's experiences in humanitarian environments where up to two-thirds of patients develop deep wound infections, 80% of which result from unsterile intraoperative settings.[10] SurgiBox has been developing and testing its technology platform for the past five years. It is working with private and public partners that are treating patients to tackle the problems of multidrug-resistant, surgery-related infection in situations of damaged or threatened infrastructure. Another example is being led by Association Internationale de Cooperation Medicale (AICM), which is introducing a hand-held ultrasound device that connects by Wi-Fi to the user's smartphone. This assists primary healthcare staff to identify complex symptoms with early diagnosis where access to secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities is difficult. For example, Dnipro oblast is a large area and local 'family doctors' serve multiple villages, often without specialist diagnosis equipment. The project goes beyond the technology itself to seek to connect doctors of different disciplines to help build a mutually supportive network.

To date they have distributed **23 devices** with the associated training that is improving outcomes for **600 patients** per month, and have a plan to distribute a total of **100 units**. The process will take some months due to the training involved.

The amount of **invention-driven innovation** was low, reflecting the low level of original research taking place in the year since the re-invasion within humanitarian efforts. Ukrainian research institutions found it difficult to win funding, or to retain their existing funding in some cases. They reported finding it very difficult to engage with, and navigate, the international humanitarian sector. As one respondent put it, "We know there is money, but we do not know where to find it". Another respondent noted: "We would actually be glad to be able to support the humanitarian response more through our work although our impression is that the international humanitarian system in Ukraine is not very receptive to the local research community. At least, that has so far been our experience in interacting with the Cluster architecture where our opportunities for access are limited". This appears to be a function of two of the sector's weaknesses that are combining to inhibit invention-driven innovation: i) much of the international humanitarian sector has failed to localise in terms of supporting local humanitarian actors, of which local research institutions are a sub-group; and ii) addressing the nexus, many of the research institutions would not describe themselves as humanitarian-oriented and tend to invest research efforts in areas that speak to longer-term underlying issues. These issues are of great importance to Ukrainians who are already looking towards recovery and building a better Ukraine, but are of less interest to humanitarian actors with a more narrow and short-term purpose.

An example of looking to longer-term issues over short-term humanitarian concerns is the situation of the Kharkiv School of Architecture (KHSA), which was forced to move amid intense fighting. Supported by fundraising efforts of staff at the University of Brighton, with which there was a longstanding partnership, KHSA was able to find new

premises in Lviv and thus retain students and staff. The partnership with the University of Brighton also enabled an event to be held in London where they brought together architects from other cities that had experienced heavy fighting, including Belfast and Beirut, to talk about lessons for the future and what shape re-building should take. This work is evolving with additional relationships, including the New Bauhaus School and architects from Bosnia, to develop a vision of what a truly Ukrainian re-building process might look like. They wish to avoid a 'colonisation by reconstruction' whereby international funding could lead to the pre-dominance of Western European contractors. By contrast, the humanitarian community is currently focused on short-term shelter issues and winterisation.

This study has found that most innovation was adaptive and there was little to no invention-driven innovation. As per the model in Figure 1, more inventive approaches involve higher levels of uncertainty and risk. Humanitarian organisations were under significant pressure during the first months of the response. In an environment where they often had little track record of dealing with issues of registration and establishing basics such as bank accounts, they were also under pressure to programme large volumes of money quickly that met the traditional humanitarian objectives of saving lives and livelihoods. It was also unclear how the conflict would evolve. These pressures incentivise a conservative approach, whereas progress along the continuum towards greater innovation implies greater uncertainty and higher risk (see Figure 1).

3.2 Funding as a key constraint or enabler

The dynamics of grant dispersal present barriers for research groups, which are finding non-traditional sources more accessible.

Funding availability was mentioned by all interlocutors as a key enabler or blocker. It is not clear that the relatively high volumes of funding for the Ukraine response led to more funding for innovation or research compared to funding more standard programming. Pre-existing funding commitments that could be re-purposed led to the fastest adaptations, as in the case of the UNICEF online cash programme.

Funding is a constraint in part because a number of donors struggle to programme relatively small grants. Donors noted that they were encouraging interested applicants to find a larger agency which would be willing to act as a consortium lead so that the funding could be aggregated. This obviously relies on good relationships and strong networks for researchers to find agencies that are willing to include the research submission with their own, but these relationships did not really exist since many humanitarian actors were new to Ukraine. Further, any such agreement then will inevitably involve a discussion on whether the proposed research aligns with the goal of the larger grant, again another potential barrier. Respondents also noted the need to train local researchers on how to access and work with international funding as it has specific rules that they are not familiar with.

Humanitarian appeal documents make no reference to research or innovation. It is broadly assumed that the approaches and methods for response are well established and it is a case of applying these to the specific context. The underlying narrative of all humanitarian appeals is "please give us money because we know what we are doing".

Even when funding is available, it can be challenging to absorb it. For example, the Hazardous Waste Management Association, a Ukraine-based business association, wants to conduct research for innovation on options for removal and recycling of war debris. Japan recently awarded funding to the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme, an inter-agency initiative by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), which had previously been focusing on eastern Ukraine. The programme has been scaling up because of the conflict and features both debris-handling and emergency explosive ordnance disposal for a safer war waste response. Because of the complexity of the funding arrangements, the Hazardous Waste Management Association now needs to provide training to its members (businesses) to understand how to meet the conditions of this funding as contractors under this project.

Funding from non-traditional humanitarian sources can be more accessible and flexible for non-traditional humanitarian activities. The Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine noted that the private sector had funds they were able to allocate, and these could be more flexible. These funds are partly incentivised by environment, social, governance (ESG) related regulations that are becoming an increasing demand for many investment funds. While it has been argued that such expectations should be reduced in the current context of Ukraine, the country's long-term desire for EU integration remains an incentive to meet such standards. In turn this means that some private sector actors are open to investing in research and innovation, particularly on matters of green recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine, as it helps them to report against their ESG frameworks, which should facilitate a greater access to EU markets.

3.3 Role of relationships in research and innovation

Coordination structures are not able to connect humanitarian actors to national research networks in-country, but potential exists to facilitate collaborations.

There is little evidence that the cluster coordination system has been able to play a connecting role between humanitarian actors and research bodies. The terms of reference for clusters do mention "develop a capacity-development strategy for the sector", but there is no mention of enabling research or innovation. This is perhaps not a surprise and reflects the response focus of clusters, that emphasise aspects such as need assessment, gap analysis and advocacy for funds, promoting standards and integration

of cross-cutting issues. National research groups are often concerned about underlying issues or the impacts on areas beyond the traditional humanitarian sectors such as health, WASH, shelter, and so on.

The Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine, for example, has long served as a platform for bringing together the perspectives of the practitioner and research communities for sustainable development, strengthening local communities and the potential of the private sector. The association publishes a journal and the membership includes 28 universities and research institutions. These include National Forestry University, Donetsk National University, Postgraduate Academy of Environmental Education and Management, Institute of Agroecology and Environmental Management at the National Academy of Agrarian Sciences, Ukrainian Research Institute of Engineering Ecology, and the Ukrainian Research Institute of Environmental Problems. However, these bodies currently feel disconnected from the humanitarian endeavour and lack funding even though they see an urgent need for research to assess the war impacts on the environment, particularly forestry and marine ecosystems.

Asking clusters to take on another responsibility when they have no significant funding to allocate and limited resources to manage their core function might be unrealistic. However, as one cluster lead speculated, they could offer an interesting space to frame the right research questions given their high-level view of the response. Cluster coordinators are well placed to identify the difference between a lack of capacity or funding and what is a thornier problem requiring research or an innovative approach. In turn, the clarity of the research question could enable others to allocate human capacity or funding to solving that problem, maybe bringing together different kinds of actors to work on a solution. (Amid the outpouring of goodwill, many private sector actors were looking for guidance on how they could help relief efforts.) Such collaborations could be facilitated by communities of practice. This was the case with the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRR WG) under the umbrella of the WASH Cluster in Ukraine prior to 2022. Dedicated platforms could also facilitate collaborations.[11]

Given that each humanitarian situation is unique, but learning builds from response, this could also help speed up targeted research and learning across emergencies, as clusters can then also promote the findings or learnings to the engaged actors.

Another issue raised was how the high turnover of personnel deployed by humanitarian agencies impeded the development of relationships with Ukrainian organisations. Ukrainian researchers had stronger and more sustained relationships with the international academic community than the rapidly changing staff of international aid agencies. If institutional relationships between humanitarian agencies and research groups were strengthened at the global level, this might help each side to access the network of relationships that the other has, to find each other in a given context.

3.4 Influence of pre-2022 Ukrainian government policy

Digitalisation reform underpins the unprecedented scale of digital-based adaptations, while decentralisation reform had more mixed effects.

The context in Ukraine before the re-invasion has significantly shaped what adaptations and innovations took off, notably the **National Digitalisation Reform**. The reform helped to digitalise many public services, bolstered the country's IT sector and has been instrumental in nurturing a more 'digitalised culture'. For example, the Diia platform helped to process the registration and storage of files on people who had been internally displaced and, subsequently, process their cash assistance entitlements through the bank of their choosing.[12]

Multiple examples exist of a more digital approach being adopted than is common in other responses globally. This has been used to improve efficiency, for example, in automatising targeting processes, as in the UNICEF and NRC examples, as well as for improving data for needs analysis and service provision information – including in hard-to-reach locations as with the Premise app example.

Digitalisation has enabled information-gathering often not collected in other contexts – such as the online dashboard of environmental damage from war to various ecosystems, managed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources.

Perhaps most notably, it has enabled a huge amount of communication via multiple social media channels. At one level, this has democratised the humanitarian endeavour, as information could flow without the need to be connected to the formal humanitarian system. But on the other hand, it has created multiple parallel systems of communication, as different groups preferred different social media platforms, and it has remained difficult for people to find each other unless introduced at some point by a human connection.

All of these digitalisation processes were forms of adaptation, essentially improvements to existing ways of working, but there is a risk that a too-simplistic narrative emerges about the advantages of digital capacity and how it interacts with the humanitarian purpose. For example, older age groups who are often the most likely to remain in an area under active conflict, typically have lower levels of digital literacy. IsraAID have been introducing chatbots and QR codes as a communication, monitoring and accountability tool to ensure the availability and quality of water supplies they had put in place, serving more than 54,000 people. Their own monitoring found that older people and those without smartphones were not able to make use of these tools, creating a bias within their feedback and data systems towards younger people and those with smartphones.

They are now working to adapt their systems. This highlights how there is a need to ensure the most vulnerable are able to access humanitarian services fully.

Another government policy, the **National Decentralisation Reform**, also had an influence although with mixed results. The policy included the pursuit of greater fiscal autonomy for local communities and delegation of administrative powers. The effectiveness of this varied widely depending on local initiative and absorption capacity but nevertheless, the 'decentralisation language' of the last eight years has encouraged decentralised thinking. The State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) noted that the community-focused emergency alert/notification system was only as effective as the decentralisation achieved by that community more generally. Decentralisation caused extra levels of bureaucracy and decision-making for humanitarian agencies when rolling out programmes in multiple locations.

3.5 Civil society's role in the response

An active civil society was an enabler of programme adaptations, but due diligence requirements of international agencies were a hindrance.

Civic activism has played a significant role in the humanitarian response. This was encouraged in the national sustainable development strategy 'Ukraine 2020', adopted in 2015 which sought a 'social contract between the government, business, and civil society' and included a dedicated national strategy for civil society development.[13]

As has been commented on elsewhere,[14] the international community has struggled to engage with this outpouring of spontaneous self-organisation and activism. Nonetheless, the strength of Ukrainian civil society has enabled a number of programme adaptations by international agencies for a more locally led response. Christian Aid built upon their and Local to Global Protection's experience and learning with the 'Survivor and Community Led response'.[15] This had previously benefited from a research partnership with King's College London and what was then DFID (now FCDO) funding, and has been tested in Kenya, Myanmar, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel (OPTI) and the Philippines. It was rolled out to a greater scale in Ukraine, partly helped by the level of media coverage that showed the actions of Ukrainians not just as survivors but actors in their own right. Together with the Hungarian International Church, cash transfers were used to support local churches who were among the first responders. A partnership with the Ukrainian body, Alliance for Public Health (APH) has enabled the disbursal of 210 micro-grants in just three months to marginalised groups (people with substance abuse habits, sex workers) who developed their own proposals of what the money should be used for.

3.6 Local channels of support

Support to the local 'ecosystem' of assistance – including from and of business – is enabling innovation, albeit on a small scale.

The picture in Ukraine is more complex than a binary flow of international or national funding to local organisations that are providing services. There is also work that supports the 'ecosystem' of assistance. For example, in two oblasts a Ukrainian NGO, Moloda Hromada (Young Community), is adapting the use of a Citizen Token System (CTS) for humanitarian purposes. Previously, these had been created for more development-type applications like submitting proposals to a local budget through digital channels. In the current scheme a citizen can acquire a governance token in exchange for goods or services – for instance, providing home-made pickles for internally displaced people as part of a winterisation effort, for trench digging or other activities. They can then use the token value to vote for where public finances should be directed. This could be a local project considered a priority by the token holder through a 'smart contract' mechanism. (This work was also shaped by the decentralisation policy described above.)

Ukrainian-led research has been done on the Ukrainian outpouring of solidarity and philanthropy. The Zagoriy Foundation started research on Ukrainian philanthropy in 2018 to understand how to successfully build a culture of giving. Research in June 2022[16] found the number of donations grew tenfold, and numbers of volunteers expanded by six times in response to the re-invasion compared to the foundation's original research. The Zagoriy survey found levels of trust were higher towards volunteer groups than institutions.

However, volunteers become tired, burn out and need to attend to their own personal situations, whereas institutions with paid staff are more sustainable.

This will mean that people need to be willing to re-direct their giving. Zagoriy are offering their research to help organisations know how best to communicate about their work, and are now also researching burn-out among volunteers. It is hoped that by understanding the key factors in this they can inform donors on the support they could provide to mitigate this.

Businesses have played a significant role in the humanitarian effort as well as CSOs. CIVIC, a UK-registered social enterprise,[17] have developed a series of fund mechanisms to support purpose-driven Ukrainian businesses. The funding mechanisms identify Ukrainian businesses with a vision to "build a radically better Ukraine". These include funds to enable businesses to pivot their activities to help at a greater scale – for example, clothing companies donating clothes, a bakery that provides work for people living with disabilities, an innovation centre welcoming businesses that needed to relocate – as well as providing more significant amounts for businesses responding to the

rebuilding efforts. CIVIC went to great lengths to ensure the design process was led by Ukrainian entrepreneurs, although the concept had been developed in other post-crisis situations.

3.7 Different timelines and ethical concerns as barriers

Ethical frameworks could enable more rapid innovation, especially in sudden-onset crises that are not typically conducive to research.

The humanitarian response to the February 2022 re-invasion is in many ways still at a relatively early stage. The frenetic first months of a response are arguably inherently unconducive to research-based innovation. There may be spontaneous innovations, but research takes time, and time is in short supply in a sudden-onset emergency. As an example, the UNDP lab had a partnership initiative with the City University of New York (CUNY) for research on drone-aided damage and loss assessment. While UNDP wanted a fast result given the crisis situation, CUNY were reluctant to reduce the rigour of their process and this led to frustrations between the partners.

Consequently, it is not surprising that most innovations arise from research and trial done in other responses, often over many years, and then adapted to the newest response.

There are a number of humanitarian innovation platforms globally, but these tend to be in protracted settings. One donor respondent noted the concern that it is not ethical to experiment on people already impacted by war, and that a 'do no harm' principle was of greater importance. This can mean that some donors are cautious about funding untried approaches, even though this case study would suggest that organisations on the ground are keen to conduct adaptive innovation so as to deliver appropriate programming. Making more explicit use of ethical frameworks to set limits on what might be reasonable could help to unlock some resources and enable more rapid innovation. We have already developed some principles and guidelines on this in our Humanitarian Innovation Guide.[18] As reported above, non-humanitarian sources did fund new ways of working that have positively contributed to the response. More agile or adaptive capacity, within boundaries, could enable more progress in appropriate programming.

3.8 Leadership as an enabler

Senior leaders on the ground were ready to back risk-taking and change organisational procedures to find fast solutions.

An innovation that gained a high profile was the medical train established by MSF Belgium to bring patients from the east of Ukraine, where the fighting was most intense, to the west of the country. This innovation arose after a respected senior leader

from the Brussels Operational Centre, in Ukraine at the time of the re-invasion, saw that road convoys were being attacked. A meeting was sought with the Ukrainian Railways leadership and the idea of a rail-based solution was proposed and enthusiastically agreed upon. The combined leadership both within MSF and within Ukrainian Railways ensured that staff were quickly deployed to work on a range of problems that emerged. As of 24 January 2023, MSF had transported 2,662 patients, many of them war-wounded, during 84 trips. Together with family members and caregivers, they have transported well over 3,000 people.

Similarly, an experienced and trusted senior leader from NRC who was supporting Ukraine was appointed to lead on the development of the organisation's cash programming. Given the digital landscape in Ukraine, it was decided to build on existing partnerships with WhatsApp and Twilio to develop a digital solution. This required the support of additional digital expertise. The normal recruitment process for hiring such expertise would take too long and be unlikely to attract people of the calibre required. The organisation trusted the senior leader and supported the rapid recruitment of people with non-traditional profiles so that a small, high-calibre team was able to develop a successful and novel way of working.

In both cases, organisational procedures developed over many years and in many contexts to protect the organisations had become a hindrance to doing something different, fast and at scale. Risks needed to be taken and that required seniority and trust in a way that more junior staff would have struggled to achieve.

As one interviewee said, "Leadership needs to be aware of the granular detail – it cannot be run centrally from far away".

4 Conclusions

CONCLUSIONS

This case study, while not systematic in its sampling, nonetheless highlights a number of exciting innovations, as well as frustrations, particularly for Ukrainian research institutions that want higher levels of collaboration with the international humanitarian community.

Invention innovation is unlikely in the early months of a major scale-up. The challenges of mounting a major new response, including for those charged with coordination, are too great to undertake wholly new research. However, it is clear that there was huge goodwill and Ukrainian organisations of all types – civil society, private sector, government and research bodies – sought to pivot their work to be able to provide assistance. International agencies sought to bring best practice and learning that had been hard-won in other contexts, while being open to adapt it further for the Ukrainian context.

Enablers of this adaptive programming and adaptation-driven innovation were:

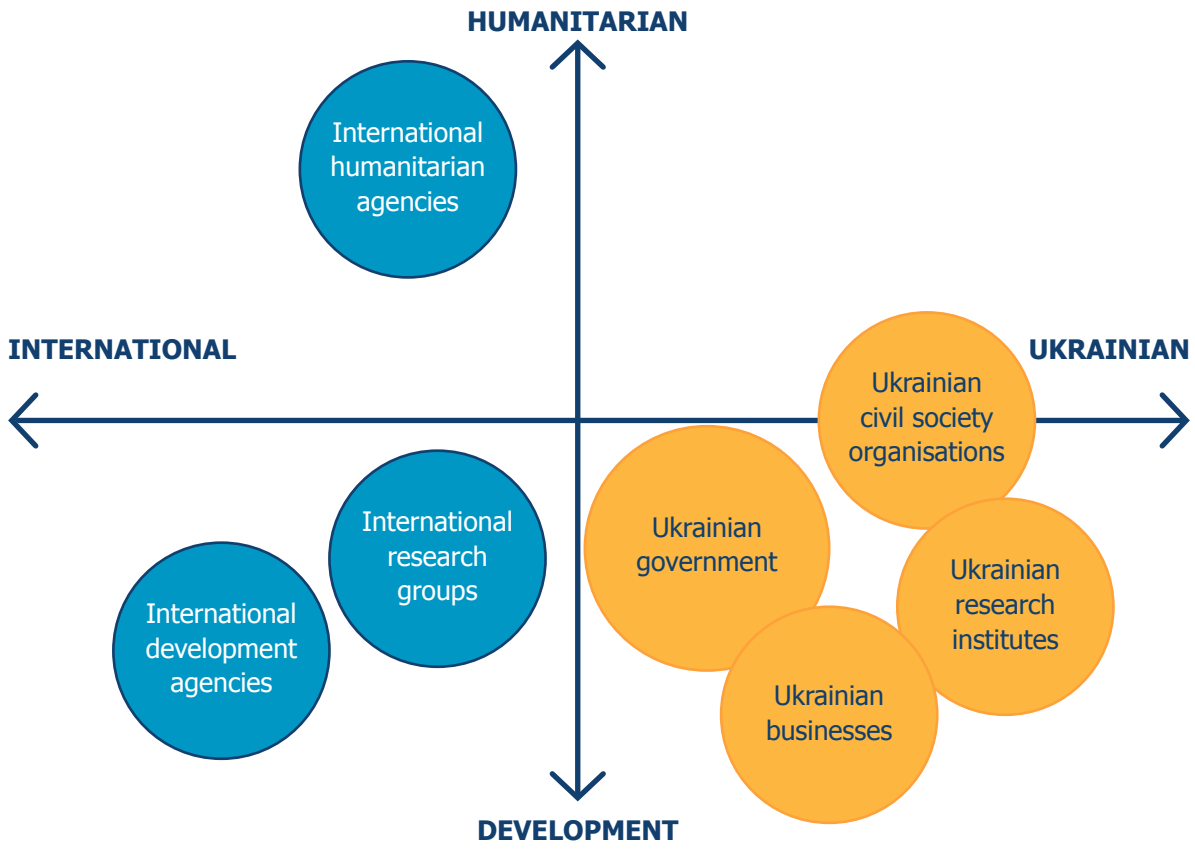
- **Long-term research and testing.** That is, being able to trial an innovation in protracted or multiple humanitarian contexts, building on the learning and investments each time.
- **Flexible funding availability.** The most flexible funding appeared to come from non-humanitarian sources, either private giving or businesses that donated resources. Within the humanitarian sector, re-purposing existing grants was the fastest way of working, with flexible funding often reliant on emergency procedures that temporarily reduced due diligence. This flexibility varied across different organisations.
- **Agile leadership.** Senior leaders who were willing to support risk-taking and unblock the internal bureaucratic requirements of agencies helped those working on innovations by resolving technical or procedural objections. This helped those working on the innovations by resolving technical or procedural objections. Any innovation means change to the normal way of doing things and so involves a level of risk which requires someone with authority to approve. This points to the value of deploying senior leaders to responses who have the trust of their headquarters, so they can marry the granular understanding of on-ground issues with overcoming internal hurdles. (Leadership that does not take such risks acts as an inhibitor to innovation.)
- **Government policy and regulatory environment.** The pre-existing Ukraine policy and investment in digitalisation enabled a number of digital-based adaptations to be used in ways not seen before at such scale in humanitarian action. The promotion of civil society space enabled a large-scale and rapid mobilisation of civil society resources. However, a legacy of high levels of bureaucracy can limit options, and the

decentralisation policy had mixed results when fast and consistent decision-making was needed. Within international agencies, the regulatory environments imposed by donor governments, or home-country regulators – and indeed by agencies themselves – similarly either enabled or inhibited adaptation-driven innovation.

- **Partnerships.** The great majority of innovations are the result of collaborations. A lot of creativity comes from collaboration and relationships where different skillsets and capacities are brought to bear on a common objective. However, the humanitarian network and the research network are not well connected and coordination structures were not able to help them to join up in-country.

Acknowledging the positives, there is still room for improvement. This will require progress on two of the humanitarian sector's thorny problems: the humanitarian-development nexus and the relationship between international and national actors. They can be conceived of as two axes, with organisations inhabiting a particular quadrant as their normal, or comfortable, space – see Figure 2. To see more innovation, organisations of all types need to have the internal adaptive capacity to shift into a new quadrant. That is a significant challenge when their internal policies, procedures, external relationships and funding mechanisms have been designed for the quadrant seen as their natural home, additionally often informed by other contexts. Innovation will emerge where there is greatest flexibility and leadership to step out of comfort zones.

Figure 2. Organisations' normal comfort zones



Where humanitarian endeavour is seen as only addressing immediate short-term response priorities then the field of research that is relevant is similarly narrowed. This plays to the dynamic of long-term testing in multiple humanitarian environments by international agencies which can then 'import' learning and adapt to the new environment. If the research is building on pre-existing Ukrainian research priorities, these are much more likely to be nexus or development-oriented. Coordination structures present an opportunity to help in this by using their 'helicopter perspective' to identify key research questions. Identifying the key questions will help funders, research groups and operational agencies to collaborate. The process of research itself could play a connecting role across these axes by bringing different institutions to work together on a shared problem.

It is worth remembering that should the conflict in Ukraine become further protracted then the research and innovation taking place now will itself contribute to agency learning for future emergencies, particularly those in middle-income countries.

The weak relationships and networks between the international humanitarian sector and the Ukrainian research community are not a surprise. However, a greater level of 'preparedness' could be achieved if the headquarters of international agencies reach out to global-level research bodies that have extensive networks with research bodies in different countries. This would allow each network to find the other in the onset of a new emergency, with individuals able to signpost and connect to other individuals who can contribute to a particular initiative.

However, beyond identifying possible partnerships, international humanitarian actors do not have the pre-existing systems to enable them to support local research bodies easily. International agencies need to improve their ability to fund smaller local organisations, including the research and academic institutions which may work to different timelines. This area warrants further research in and beyond Ukraine.

Innovation, particularly invention-driven innovation, is inherently more high-risk than established approaches. Establishing ethical and risk frameworks that define what is possible could enable practitioners to try more novel approaches in real time and find solutions faster. While retaining a minimum 'do no harm' principle, a greater willingness to accept failure as part of the price for innovation and future improvements needs to be accepted.

5 Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the experiences highlighted in this case study, we propose the following recommendations:

1. Operational humanitarian agencies need to review their internal procedures to be more flexible (not a one-size-fits-all approach) and able to balance risk management with supporting national organisations, including research groups, and those who may not fit the typical humanitarian mould.
2. Operational agencies should deploy senior, trusted leaders to scale-ups, as this improves adaptive capacity by bringing together a granular understanding of the context with how to navigate organisational bureaucratic barriers.
3. Coordination mechanisms should include the identification of key questions that would benefit from targeted research and innovation. Framing these questions clearly will help target funding and enable the creative potential of organisations and collaborations. This could be included with the terms of reference for clusters as standard. Research and innovation needs should be included within appeal documents such as Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP). This could also provide a positive contribution to more routine data collection efforts on outcomes.
4. International humanitarian agencies should seek to map, identify and partner with Ukrainian research bodies. This presents several concurrent opportunities: increasing Ukrainian agency and voice, benefiting from the deep understanding of the context, and enabling the capacities that will be required for a sustained recovery.
5. Donors can enable more innovation by making funding mechanisms simpler for bodies that are not used to applying for such contracts or providing more support, perhaps through third parties such as innovation-focused NGOs or hosted platforms.
6. More explicit use should be made of ethical frameworks to determine the limits of appropriate experimentation within a humanitarian context. This would encourage funding for risk-taking in research and innovation, but would also provide assurance that it is within thought-through limits.
7. Good quality monitoring and accountability systems remain critical to ensure the most vulnerable are not unintentionally excluded by an over-focus on any dominant narrative about the benefits of any particular innovation.

References

REFERENCES

- Betts, A. and Bloom L. (2014). 'Humanitarian Innovation: The State of the Art'. Occasional Policy Paper, OCHA Policy and Studies Series 009, https://reliefweb.int/report/world/humanitarian-innovation-state-art
- Corbett, J., Carstensen, N. and Di Vicenz, S. (2021). 'Survivor- and community-led crisis response Practical experience and learning'. Network Paper Number 84, Humanitarian Practice Network, London: ODI
- Harrison, L. with Kondratenko, D. and Korenkova, K. (2022). 'Options for supporting and strengthening local humanitarian action in Ukraine: a scoping exercise report'. Commissioned by Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), November 2022, https://www.dec.org.uk/report/ukraine-scoping-exercise-report
- Humanitarian Innovation Fund/Elrha (n.d.). 'Humanitarian Innovation Guide', https://higuide.elrha.org/
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2010). Operational Guidance Generic Terms of Reference for Cluster Coordinators at the Country Level, Microsoft Word - IASC Operational Guidance Generic ToR for Cluster Coordinators at the Country Level 2010.doc (interagencystandingcommittee.org)
- Issa, Z., Camburn, J., Schenck, C., Almalla, M. and Jabbour, S. (2022). 'Who funds what? Humanitarian research and innovation funding flows analysis'. London: Elrha
- Obrecht, A. and Warner, A. T. (2016). 'More than just luck: Innovation in humanitarian action'. Elrha-HIF/ ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- OCHA (2022a). Humanitarian Response Plan Ukraine, February 2022, https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-response-plan-2022-february-2022-enuk
- OCHA (2022b). Ukraine Flash Appeal April revision (March – August 2022), https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-flash-appeal-march-august-2022-enruuk
- OCHA (2022c). Ukraine Situation Report, 19 December 2022, https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-situation-report-19-dec-2022-enruuk
- Rainchuk, L. (2022). 'Charity in times of war'. Zagoriy Foundation and the Ukrainian Center for Public Opinion Research 'Sotsioinform', https://zagoriy.foundation/en/publications/charity-in-times-of-war-a-quantitative-study
- Stoddard, A., Harvey, P., Timmins, N., Pakhomenko, V., Breckenridge, M.-J. and Czwarno, M. (2022). Enabling the local response: Emerging humanitarian priorities in Ukraine March–May 2022. Humanitarian Outcomes, 10 June 2022, https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Ukraine_review_June_2022

Main report

1. OCHA 2022c
2. Stoddard et al. 2021
3. See UNDP's DIA Support Project: Digital, Inclusive, Accessible: Support to Digitalisation of Public Services in Ukraine (DIA Support) Project | United Nations Development Programme (undp.org)
4. Ukrainian internet sources were and are blocked in Russian-controlled areas, so residents need to be familiar with how to use and have access to VPN to access the services.
5. Progress varied by region but was recognised by the European Parliament as a successful case study for other countries. See: European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on the implementation of the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0050_EN.html
6. Harrison et al. 2022
7. Obrecht and Warner 2016
8. Ibid.
9. Self-registration and online application have also been developed by the Estonian Refugee Council in Jordan, see: https://register.pagulasabi.ee/
10. Globally, caesarean sections are the most common surgery needed in humanitarian settings, but due to insanitary conditions an estimated 5,000 women die per year due to infections contracted during the operation, according to SurgiBox.
11. Uganda Learning, Evidence, Accountability, and Research Network (U-Learn) is an example of a platform that explicitly seeks to bring together humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors to address humanitarian issues in the context of the large refugee population in Uganda.
12. There are two cash assistance schemes run through the government digital platform currently, eDopomoha (eAssistance) and ePidtrymka (eSupport).
13. It is important to understand the cultural and political significance of civil society in Ukraine given its role in the 2004 'Orange Revolution' and the 2014 'Revolution of Dignity'.
14. Stoddard et al. 2022
15. Corbett et al. 2021
16. Rainchuk 2022
17. Not to be confused with Center for Civilians in Conflict.
18. See: Humanitarian Innovation Fund/Elrha (n.d.). 'Principles and Ethics', in Humanitarian Innovation Guide, https://higuide.elrha.org/toolkits/get-started/principles-and-ethics/

Interviewees

INTERVIEWEES

- **David Alford**, WASH Cluster Coordinator, WASH Cluster (UNICEF)
- **Vanda Baranovska**, Professor and Head of Sustainable Development Education Centre, Postgraduate Academy of Environmental Education and Management
- **Karen Bernstein**, Chief Strategy Officer, SurgiBox
- **Molly Bernstein**, Innovation, Information and Impact Coordinator, IsraAID
- **Lamia Bezer**, Health Cluster Coordinator, Health Cluster (WHO)
- **Oleksandr Bilotil**, Senior Lecturer, National University of Civil Protection (SESU)
- **Valery Bolgan**, Coordinator, Partnership for European Transparency
- **Oleksandr Bondar**, Director, Postgraduate Academy of Environmental Education and Management
- **Christian Carerra**, Founder and President, Association Internationale de Cooperation Medicale (AICM)
- **Yuliia Chykolba**, Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Lead, HALO Trust
- **Marijke Deleu**, Learning Manager, U-Learn/Response Innovation Lab
- **Taras Doroniuk**, Director Development, Kyiv School of Economics
- **Gabriele Erba**, Beneficiary Data System Specialist, UNICEF
- **Andrii Havaza**, Lecturer, Research Institute of Civil Protection
- **Denys Holovetsky**, Operations Manager, HALO Trust
- **Alice Hooper**, Humanitarian Adviser, Ukraine, FCDO
- **Mykola Khomutovsky**, Digital Innovation Officer, European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine
- **Kyrylo Kosourov**, Chairman of the Board, Hazardous Waste Management Association
- **Ievgen Kylymnyk**, Head of Exploration – Accelerator Lab, UNDP
- **Tim McInerny**, Cash and Markets Lead, Central and Eastern Europe Region, NRC
- **Robert Mull**, Professor of Architecture and Design, University of Brighton
- **Larysa Polska**, Chairwoman of the Board, Kherson Community Foundation
- **Liubov Rainchuk**, Deputy Director, Zagoriy Foundation
- **Jonathan Robinson**, Co-Founder, CIVIC
- **Lillie Rosen**, Innovation Advisor, Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance / USAID
- **Phil Smith**, Business Development Executive, Premise
- **Inna Starchikova**, Executive Director, Moloda Hromada-Young Community
- **Sviatoslav Surma**, Coordinator, Ridnya Communities Foundation
- **Christopher Stokes**, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, MSF Belgium
- **Liudmyla Tsyhanok**, President, Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine
- **Simone Di Vicenz**, Resilience and Community-Led Response Specialist, Christian Aid

Appendix A

Summary descriptions of innovations

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS OF INNOVATIONS

Association Internationale de Cooperation Medicale (AICM)

AICM has been working in Ukraine since 2006.

Diagnostics were a particular problem for doctors who did not have access to clinic-level care, and there was a need to help 'family doctors' to detect initial problems and then direct the person to the correct specialist quickly.

The Papillon project in Chernihiv oblast introduced a hand-held ultrasound device that allows primary healthcare staff to identify complex symptoms. Doctors can share images and discuss diagnosis and case management via Telegram chats with specialists.

The technology was developed by a private sector company in France around ten years ago for doctors to have something portable, including for use in emergency rooms. But AICM saw the opportunity to use it in Ukraine. To date they have distributed 23 devices with the associated training that is improving outcomes for 600 patients per month, and have a plan to distribute a total of 100 units. The process will take some months due to the training involved. Usually family doctors have no skills in ultrasound equipment so selection and training are key. AICM prioritise the regions in most need, for example, remote villages/settlements where access is problematic. If patients need to be relocated, they coordinate with local taxi companies or owners of cars to provide appropriate transport.

The digital policy and medical reform that existed before the re-invasion were important contributory elements to the success of this effort. But there have been problems with the quality of the mobile phones and laptops that doctors are using. Additionally, they have had to negotiate with health practitioners and authorities as professional competition can exist between disciplines, such as family doctors and specialists. The hope is that the project will strengthen the health network through encouraging collaboration.

Christian Aid – Survivor and Community Led Response (SCLR)

Some of Christian Aid's research outside Ukraine had suggested that traditional humanitarian work was undermining community resilience by breaking down some of the community fabric. They partnered with King's College London, with funding from then DFID (now FCDO), to deepen the research. At the same time, the organisation Local to Global Protection were doing similar research.

Having co-designed the SCLR approach, it was tested in Kenya, Myanmar, the Philippines and Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel. Funding was a challenge for the pilots, and Christian Aid had to use internal

resources. However, they were able to develop evidence that it was working and published a report with Humanitarian Policy Group in 2020 based on ten years of research. The support of King's College London was useful in giving the research credibility, but Christian Aid still had to overcome internal scepticism about the approach, and handle donors who wanted to know in advance how the money would be spent.

Ukraine allowed Christian Aid to demonstrate that SCLR could be done at speed, in part benefiting from media and publicity around Ukraine that gave more coverage of the actions of Ukrainians, for instance, not talking about them only as survivors but as actors.

Initially Christian Aid worked with the Hungarian International Church (HIA) to do cash transfers to local churches that had been among the first responders. It was necessary to adapt to the local context – for example, Ukrainian government regulations limited transfers to €20,000, and it was difficult to give money to unregistered organisations (under anti-corruption legislation). A second phase worked with the Alliance for Public Health (APH) to provide micro-grants of €2,500 to groups of marginalised people who would propose how to use the money. This included capacity-strengthening with skills and training such as bookkeeping, repairs, and how to link to coordination mechanisms.

With APH, Christian Aid were able to issue 210 micro-grants in just three months and are looking to scale this approach further. Micro-grants have helped to bring a different appreciation of what is needed by going a step further than simple consultation processes. For example, survivors think about upcoming needs much earlier than agencies; they started thinking about winterisation in May – much earlier than a needs-based assessment would highlight.

CIVIC – using grants to enable community-led response

CIVIC aim to amplify/raise voices of Ukrainian businesses to pursue their vision to rebuild a radically better Ukraine. CIVIC have done aspects of this in other places (Jordan and the Sahel) and borrowed much from that learning and experience. However, the Ukraine initiative had to be put together in a new way.

CIVIC set themselves the question of what would enable Ukrainian businesses to play a valuable role in the response and be the seed for future growth? What is the vision of Ukrainian purpose-driven business? They were able to gain funding from Save the Children / DEC which was a critical enabler, as was having the trust of Save the Children to develop a framework that allowed a lot of creativity.

Using social media and informal networks, CIVIC assembled a team of five Ukrainian entrepreneurs to identify a much wider network of purpose-driven Ukrainian entrepreneurs. No one was hired full-time so as to avoid them becoming disconnected from their other projects and networks. CIVIC hosted a three-day co-design workshop in Warsaw, held in Polish and Ukrainian. To enable people to speak freely and creatively, there was no requirement to translate into English.

They developed a 'fund of funds' to make investments or grants to socially motivated business. The goal was to invest in the ecosystem of business rather than intervene directly and potentially disrupt it. The project is still at an early stage, but the ambition is to grow to a €5 million fund over 18 months.

This is more of a nexus intervention; the actors work across humanitarian and development spheres. Many of the entrepreneurs' early efforts were humanitarian in nature such as giving items away (for example, a bakery giving bread away), but then these became more like a social enterprise (the bakery employing people with disabilities, for instance). Their aim is to have a much less disruptive model than the standard humanitarian approach of establishing offices, hiring people, then closing and letting people go.

In Ukraine there is exceptional talent and initiative, but these are under the radar of existing actors. A culture of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has also helped.

European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine

The eCase management innovation seeks to address the problem of cumbersome pre-trial proceedings in criminal cases, particularly those related to war crimes. Since February 2022 more than 20,000 claims were filed through the warcrimes.gov.ua platform. Existing systems were not designed for such a volume of cases.

The system digitises the hundreds of documents belonging to each individual war crime case. This enables the investigation team to work in parallel from various or multiple locations and to monitor developments in real time. The system also provides additional tools for creating analytics and visualisation of data. It is organised around:

- Case Navigation – the task is to develop basic functionality for prosecutors to upload documents and visualise data related to war crimes.
- Case Flow – the task is to enhance functionality for prosecutors and develop functionality for investigators, increase transparency and minimise procedural errors.
- Case Connectivity – the task is to provide integrations with the national courts information systems, international court information systems, tax and revenue information, and so on.

The system was developed out of a collaboration between EUAM, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine and the contractor company CIVITTA. EUAM provided funding.

The main challenges to overcome were bureaucracy and legislative bottlenecks. As the platform is designed to work with sensitive data accessed normally through compartmentalised procedures, each module and the list of its elements required approvals by multiple agencies, and some legislative issues also needed to be addressed.

HALO Trust

Millions of Ukrainians have been displaced in 2022 from the various regions that have been attacked or bombed by Russia. There is also a smaller population who were displaced prior to 2022. The HALO Trust has developed several digital tools for Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) to provide for a safer return of those who have been displaced.

Those tools include remote learning EORE platforms for teachers and local civic activists. The sessions are held on Zoom, or the pre-recorded versions can also be accessed via QR codes, and built around the specific anecdotal scenarios. Slido platforms are also increasingly used for greater interaction with the audience.

Other members of the mine action professional community have made use of chatbots in instant messengers (like WhatsApp) to communicate life-saving information, including EORE messages or whereabouts of confirmed contaminated areas. This has been with the State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU).

Previously, the most common means of delivering EORE in Ukraine had been in person. Due to COVID-19, remote modalities were taking root in Ukraine (and elsewhere) but the use of instant messaging and chatbots in EORE was not widespread prior to 2022. Lessons were learned from the pre-2022 Virtual Reality EORE HALO experience that inspired an approach based on interactive sessions in a virtual reality environment, together with UNICEF. The participant takes a virtual walk along a trail in an area contaminated with explosive remnants of war as found in Ukraine, such as local types of urban war debris, or the novel Russian-used devices, including booby traps. The participant has to demonstrate safe behaviour and in doing so learns about the types and risks of explosive ordnance.

Partnerships involved were with **EdCamp Ukraine**, an NGO for school teachers, who host HALO's online course on their **EdWay** platform.

IsraAID

IsraAID are implementing a range of projects including installation of reverse osmosis plants to provide clean water in collaboration with the Mykolaiv water department. Some 523,000 litres of water processed was serving more than 54,000 people at the time of this report. In order to gain feedback from the population for monitoring and improvement of the services, particularly in areas that were less secure, they used a QR code and chatbot system for people to report issues and provide feedback online, such as from smartphones. They found the digital readiness of Ukraine a significant advantage in setting up such digital systems. However, they did learn that not everyone has equal digital access or literacy. For example, where water systems are used by older people, their mobile phones were often not set up for QR codes, and users were not clear on how to engage with chatbots. Additionally, IsraAID sought to use Telegram to receive messages, but found that there was a divide on who uses which platforms for chat.

Separately, IsraAID are working with Monday.com on a digital platform to improve supply chain management. This would be a digital system to enable detailed tracking of goods being imported to Ukraine. Each asset has a QR code to enable tracking – where from, which donor. The QR code is scanned on arrival to track supplies as these are distributed. This has improved distribution transparency and allowed more detailed data analysis. Approximately 2.2 million kg of humanitarian relief items have been tracked and distributed to 50-plus hospitals, orphanages and other partners across the country. This innovation was triggered by the scale of operation compared to other country programmes that they operate and that required a different solution. The distribution hubs and tracking system are available to other agencies.

Kharkiv School of Architecture (KHSA) and University of Brighton

A school of architecture was established in Kharkiv, in part with support from the School of Architecture, Technology and Engineering at the University of Brighton in the UK. When the Russians invaded in 2022, the school had to evacuate. It was feared that the movement of students and lecturers might mean the school would close. Colleagues at the University of Brighton and elsewhere started fundraising and were able to help the school which had found accommodation in Lviv. They were able to attract some of their students back and so return to work.

They are now looking at seven or eight research projects, looking at return and questions of Ukrainian identity. How can they reconstruct Soviet housing? They do not want to go back to a Soviet central plan, nor be colonised by Western companies attracted by rebuilding contracts. They want to address the question of not just rebuilding, but 'building back better' cognisant of the climate emergency and to reinforce Ukrainian identity. They are engaging in a participatory process.

In addition to the University of Brighton, they are working with the New Bauhaus school, engaging with architects from Bosnia, have brought in an expert from Japan and are sponsored by UNHCR.

Together with the University of Brighton, KHSA held an event in London where they brought together architects from other cities that had experienced heavy fighting – Belfast, Beirut, as well as Kharkiv – to talk about lessons for the future, aware that decisions made now may have important outcomes in the future. A separate conference was hosted by Wilton Park and FCDO in Warsaw to look at the role of the private sector. There are still concerns at KHSA that Western contractors could dominate any rebuilding.

Funding was a key enabler. The initial fundraising was successful within two weeks of the re-invasion and allowed KHSA the space to articulate a vision. Subsequently they have attracted EU and Dutch funding. There was also a risk that funding would become a barrier in that they consciously rejected funding that would have drawn staff and students away from Ukraine (some universities offered to host them outside Ukraine), but they wanted to keep the school together in the country.

Moloda Hromada-Young Community

As part of the Government of Ukraine's 'Agenda 2030' there was a commitment to "ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels". To address insufficient citizen participation in local decision-making, a Citizen Token System (CTS) was established in 2019 and piloted in six local communities by a coalition of 11 NGOs in 2021. Following Russia's 2022 re-invasion of Ukraine, local partners raised the idea with Moloda Hromada (an Odesa-based NGO) to test the CTS approaches to address new challenges, including humanitarian issues.

This approach is being piloted in two communities – one in Lviv Oblast and the other one in Volyn Oblast. A citizen can acquire a Participatory Budgeting token by providing some kind of goods or civic service. Each token has a specific value and can be used in voting to direct the corresponding amount of public finances to a local project considered a priority by the acquirer through a 'smart contract' mechanism. As a result, communities received (up to) 17.5 times more added value to public goods due to CTS than in a traditional donation method as it attracted public funding. It became evidence for local authorities on how to implement CTS in their participatory budget mechanisms beyond the project.

The system allows monitoring – for example, to signal any concentration of too many tokens with a single owner. Personal data (sex, age-disaggregated data) is a sensitive issue given the risks of occupation by the Russians, so CTS does not currently collect such data. Local partners had an opportunity to agree any additional records with local citizens.

The project was possible through funding from National Endowment for Democracy and from the Global Fund for Community Foundations, and a collaboration with Odesa National Technological University.

During implementation, the methodology had to be significantly revised from a sequential, linear method to an iterative approach to continuously incorporate feedback on different segments of the project. In 2023, Moloda Hromada and their partners are piloting a new CTS model to strengthen communities' resilience and support their recovery and reconstruction through micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – medical train

In the immediate days following the Russian re-invasion, MSF wanted to bring in medical supplies. They noted that road convoys were being attacked by Russian aircraft, but trains much less so. They approached the Lviv Train administration but in practice met the Head of National Railways and requested use of their trains. This was immediately agreed and, from the discussions, the idea also emerged of using the trains to evacuate patients in need of medical treatment to safe locations. A key to the success of this innovation was the dynamic partnership between MSF and the Head of the National Railways that ensured any issues were unblocked quickly.

MSF brought in experts to look at how to modify the rolling stock and found there were a number of technical issues to work through – for instance, that building an intensive care unit (ICU) in a train would take several

weeks. It was decided to go for a more basic approach of adapting a four-carriage sleeper train which was ready within two weeks. The first patients were moved on 1 April, weeks after the start of the war. The ICU was also developed and took two months to complete. Importantly, the national railway gave the equipment, fuel and staff free of charge.

There were hurdles to overcome as this had not been done before in Ukraine. The Ministry of Health had some initial reservations but was another critical partner in ensuring that there were places to receive the patients travelling by train. Similarly, having a senior and trusted MSF leader on the ground allowed the brokering of technical details so that these were 'good enough'. It also ensured organisational support and was key to enabling engagement with senior officials in-country.

As of 24 January 2023, the medical train has transported 2,662 patients, many of them war-wounded, over 84 trips. Together with family members and caregivers, they have transported well over 3,000 people. Due to the distances involved, each trip lasts two to three days.

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Cash programme

NRC wanted to have a cash programme that worked in the context of the mobility of Ukrainians in the immediate aftermath of the Russian re-invasion, cross-border (i.e. with refugees) and for those in Russian-occupied areas. They also wanted to establish a two-way communication with recipients as there was a void of information about needs and priorities.

This required a digital end-to-end solution that was not reliant on lots of enumerators, but via social media channels that Ukrainians were already using. NRC did not have the in-house capacity to do this, but had an existing partnership with WhatsApp and Twilio. NRC decided to create a small, agile team of highly skilled people. Development was fast-paced with daily stand-up meetings, and a rapid design-test-adapt approach using the 'Atlassian tool kit', a tech company tool. This approach was a step-change for the organisation, but was adaptive as an innovation. Starting with the problem statement and a fresh mindset were important.

To get the kind of highly skilled digital expertise needed, NRC had to find ways of working around standard human resources practice. The project leader was well known and a trusted member of staff in NRC, which allowed him to canvass and build trust among other directors to win confidence. This was important in addressing concerns raised by different teams at different times as well as winning final approval. The fact this programme was beyond the reach of any one team or department in the organisation meant that it became necessary to bring in a range of people from across NRC. This enabled more agility than is possible in well-established structures. The level of political attention on Ukraine and unrestricted funding were useful in creating the internal political space to take risks, although the technical challenges of the innovation itself remained.

The programme was piloted in Romania and then launched regionally. NRC completely underestimated the scale of what would happen! In the pilot, Ukrainians said that NRC were not really known, there were Russian disinformation campaigns and so not to expect much traffic on WhatsApp. But after a single post, 560,000

people registered with the message, spreading in a way that only digital allowed. It clogged WhatsApp for a while. They had to quickly adapt communication between decision-makers and technicians to shut the flow of registrations, as they did not have any standard operating procedures on how to manage such numbers. They needed to develop an in-house database to cope with the volume.

Postgraduate Academy of Environmental Education (PAEE)

(a research body affiliated with the Ministry of Environmental Protection)

"Our current research/innovation proposal is the creation of an information and analysis platform which would ensure the flow of information and the analysis of needs in war-affected areas – as concerns the environment – between local communities, government, NGOs, and the UN. In our vision, such [a] platform can be facilitated by the Ukrainian Association of Local and Regional Councils, which is logical for a decentralised country as Ukraine is."

The PAEE partners with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and to a lesser extent with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The PAEE reported that they would like to work more with the international humanitarian system in Ukraine, but had not found them very receptive to the local research community. They are keen to resume work that was under way before the Russian re-invasion, such as a multi-million-dollar, multi-year project on sustainable livestock and wetland conservation in northern Ukraine which was suspended with the re-invasion. The project remains relevant as the focus areas border Belarus, where cross-border economic activities are going to be restricted for some time, thus increasing demand for localised solutions across the humanitarian-development nexus for the region.

Premise

Premise is a crowdsource data collection agency that had been working in Ukraine prior to the re-invasion, promoting its app as a commercial opportunity for people to find work. Separately, Premise had an existing contract with USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) to provide data on Ukrainian health services as part of their ongoing development programme.

After the re-invasion, through partnering with WHO (some key Premise staff had a WHO background), Premise were able to pivot the data collection to understand whether health centres were actually working, particularly in the east of the country. In the early months after the re-invasion, there was a lack of information as security concerns made monitoring visits impossible. The remote data collection allowed them to gain real-time information on the needs in these insecure areas. For example, it answered questions such as: "are the health centres working?", "do they have medicines to prescribe?", "do you have family members with dialysis needs?", "does anyone in your house take heart medication and are they able to access it?", and "how much supply do they still have?". This data was then used to corroborate Ministry of Health data about health centres and access to supplies.

Information is provided via mobile phone by people living in the area. Respondents received a small remuneration via a credit on their phone or an online account such as PayPal – so it was also a form of cash distribution. Typically, most users are 18 to 28 years old and already had Premise's proprietary apps on their phones. The speed of data collection is fast, with 85% of data gathered within 72 hours of pushing out a set of questions to Premise users.

It is possible to get information on situations in Russian-controlled areas as well, but as many people left, the availability of data has shrunk. There was also a concern that asking for such data could put individuals at risk.

Initially the work was done pro-bono by Premise as a pilot. Now it is supported via a WHO emergency fund. Premise also works with the WASH CLUSTER and iMMap. iMMap provide data analysts to WHO, funded by BHA/USAID.

Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine and Hazardous Waste Management Association

The Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine has identified the need for research on the impact of the war on the environment, particularly for forestry and marine ecosystems. In turn, there is a need to research how the government and its environmental protection mandate can be adaptive. The association recognises the need for research to be increasingly applied, bringing together academia, municipalities and the private sector. Specific areas they have identified are:

- conducting environmental assessments during war; EU Green Deal requirements for war situations (perhaps, applying some crisis governance frameworks)
- timber market reform and transparency
- managing Emerald Network and other conservation areas in times of war
- alternative energy sources in times of war
- emergency and recovery clearance in ecosystems: explosive hazards, toxic chemicals, increased forest fire risks.

The Professional Association of Environmentalists of Ukraine serves as a platform that facilitates partnership in the research and innovation community. They issue a journal entitled *Sustainable Development Leader's Guide* where scientific articles are published (although, with a preference for applied rather than 'too academic' papers). Their membership includes 28 universities and research institutions. Some of those include the National Forestry University, Donetsk National University, Postgraduate Academy of Environmental Education and Management, Institute of Agroecology and Environmental Management at the National Academy of Agrarian Sciences, Ukrainian Research Institute of Engineering Ecology, and the Ukrainian Research Institute of Environmental Problems.

The Hazardous Waste Management Association currently works on war debris issues. They are particularly interested in technology transfer on removal or recycling. They are a business association drawing on experts from the research community.

There is also a portal and related app by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources named, EcoThreat: https://ecozagroza.gov.ua/en This contains a dashboard for estimating environmental damages from war for various ecosystems. It was developed by the Ministry of Digital Transformation.

Ridnya Foundation

Ridnya Foundation is a charity co-founded by a private sector business and a church parish in the western Lviv region that has established an innovation lab. Their initial work is to look at the tools and mechanisms that enable increased effectiveness of fundraising and community participation. This includes analysis of existing funding flows and the factors that improve the trust of givers towards a particular organisation or cause. Another area they wish to look at is the enablers required for local activists to roll out local initiatives, and specifically what kind of mentorship from experienced counterparts or institutions could help.

They have sought collaboration with a marketing company to analyse traffic on their website and social media channels.

State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU), overseeing the National University of Civil Protection and the Research Institute of Civil Protection

SESU sees the need for research and innovation in all areas of its work related to providing civil protection, including firefighting, search and rescue (especially urban search and rescue and rescue under the rubble), disaster medicine, demining, psychological support to survivors, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats, and the protection of civilians.

As part of the decentralisation reform, local communities were encouraged to be more proactive in civil protection matters, with a particular focus on population emergency warning. However, in practice, the progress with upgrading the local automated public alert systems was largely dependent on the ability of a community to make use of those opportunities offered by decentralisation, such as greater fiscal autonomy.

SESU's research needs are served primarily by the Research Institute of Civil Protection based in Kyiv, as well as by the network of educational establishments consisting of the National University of Civil Protection based in Kharkiv and the civil protection schools based in Lviv, Cherkasy and Vinnytsia. The Research Institute of Civil Protection conducts data collection and analyses on all emergencies, and publishes in quarterly and yearly digests. SESU also works closely with the national Hydrometeorological Institute as they are affiliated with the national Hydrometeorological Centre.

There has been a recent trend towards integrating innovation with international cooperation. For example, at the Research Institute of Civil Protection, they created a department of 'Innovation, Academic Information, and International Projects'. There is an innovation lab established at the fire safety school in Cherkasy.

More digital tools are being introduced, including chatbots for interactive communication with citizens and online maps visualising the extent of explosive hazard contamination: https://mine.dsns.gov.ua/

SESU also works with iMMAP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining on the implementation of IMSMA (Information Management System for Mine Action), a platform integrating the database, catalogue and GIS features used in around 50 countries around the world.

SurgiBox

SurgiBox is a social enterprise founded by clinicians and innovators with experience of working in difficult settings and concerned by the health risks associated with keeping surgical sites sterile.

Sparked by experiences in post-earthquake Haiti and in Afghanistan, the collaboration brought together clinicians and innovators from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Institute of Technology's D-Lab, and EssentialTech with the goal of bringing safe surgery to the point of need. SurgiBox's SurgiField™ system is an 'operating room in a kit'. The ultra-portable (the size of a small shoebox), battery-powered Smart Control Module filters air to operating-room standard and inflates a clear, single-use, surgical drape-style SurgiBubble™ attached to the surgical site of the patient. Medical staff access the surgical site via gown-like sleeve ports, line ports and material ports. Self-stabilising Pop-Up Frames provide additional support and space for accessories like lighting modules or patient monitors.

The SurgiField system is the result of more than ten years of research and testing in multiple environments since the initial concept. SurgiField was granted a humanitarian exemption in Ukraine, where the technology is helping surgical teams near the front line and across the country to tackle post-operative multidrug-resistant infections. In addition to sending the equipment, they train surgeons in its use on the ground.

UNDP Accelerator Lab

The UNDP Accelerator Lab was set up to encourage and enable grassroots innovation in 2019. They are now interested in the link between emergency humanitarian needs and a longer-term recovery and reconstruction. Issues of interest are:

- the sustainable reuse of war debris: how these materials can be recycled, then used as construction materials;
- the localised/grassroots approaches to energy generation, given the Russian campaign against civilian infrastructure;
- 'frugal innovation' in food security: utilising the experiences of Ukraine's cities besieged in 2022, like the ground chicken bones brewed with boiling water serving as a source of protein.

They undertook some research with the City University of New York (CUNY) on drone-aided damage and loss assessment. However, while UNDP was interested in delivering a fast result in the crisis situation, CUNY were cautious about reducing the rigour of their 'academic-discovery' cycle, which created challenges regarding speed and timelines.

In agreement with the Ministry of Social Policy, UNICEF's Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) Programme focused on reaching families within Ukraine with young children and/or children with disabilities. What was new was introducing an online self-registration form to apply for the HCT Programme.

When the re-invasion occurred, UNICEF was not prepared in-country to administer a large-scale cash programme, but it was clear that cash was a viable modality. UNICEF already had in place a web-based data management system known as HOPE, supported by USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the Danish government, which provides the tools needed to manage high amounts of sensitive data during the implementation of humanitarian cash transfers. However, prior to the Ukraine crisis, the registration module of HOPE was based on in-person registration or used existing household data from partners (like government or NGOs). UNICEF looked at Diia, an established government platform and one the Ukrainian public were familiar with, but data protection laws made access to this impossible without first gaining the user's consent, which the government was reluctant to do. There were also concerns of exclusion of vulnerable families who were not using this platform.

So, they changed plans and developed a self-referral system both to accelerate the speed of getting cash to households, and to reach those beyond the front line who could not be accessed physically.

Key enablers in addition to HOPE were an established technical team who could pivot to addressing this issue in Ukraine and the agreement of BHA/USAID to re-purpose existing funding. They also had an existing vendor based in Poland with a number of Ukrainian staff who understood the context. They relied on non-technical providers to help with making it appropriate to the local context.

The development team had to overcome a number of challenges:

- The government of Ukraine wanted UNICEF to establish coordination with regional governments, but this would mean multiple contracts and bureaucracy. With the support of the Ministry of Social Protection, they were able to show that the tool gave access to people everywhere and local government could use it if they wished to, and this allowed them to maintain a central system. In the end, this was resolved with the support of the Ministry of Social Protection.
- Established protocols in UNICEF to protect data by ensuring an appropriate segregation of duties had to be renegotiated. This spoke to a lack of digital preparedness on pathways to develop and deploy digital solutions within the timeline of humanitarian situations.
- There were also concerns about the impact of teething issues. There was a risk of high levels of frustration among the public; some people received error messages and there was criticism on social media. To address this, UNICEF reduced the number of validation criteria, but this negatively impacted data quality and so a new risk occurred of paying people who were not eligible. The innovation process required the team to go on a journey of what was 'good enough' to achieve speed, and then they have slowly been going back to a more rigorous verification process.
- Concerns about cybersecurity had to be addressed.

What helped overcome these issues was the visibility of the Ukraine crisis and pressure from senior leadership to move organisational barriers and increase the risk appetite.

It went live on 31 March 2022, and self-referral has dramatically changed the speed and scale of the response. In the beginning, UNICEF had three to four families submitting every second. In 2022, UNICEF distributed close to US$300 million, assisting 267,721 families, including 599,909 children in 2022.

UNICEF is now using this approach in Sri Lanka to register pregnant and lactating women who will benefit from cash assistance.

Zagoriy Foundation

The Zagoriy Foundation was established to support work on the culture of giving in Ukraine, funded by a family foundation. They have been conducting research on philanthropy in Ukraine initially to gain data for designing their own programme. More recently their aim has been to use this for advocacy to donors to fund Ukrainian organisations directly and to emphasise Ukrainian capacity: there is a need for assistance but not to be taken over.

The foundation's first research was in 2018 on philanthropy. They revised their methodology in 2019 and decided to work in a more systematic way, with a three-year cycle of research. But the year after this agreement came COVID-19, and then the war, so they have had to keep adapting rather than follow the cycle as designed. They work with a partner agency on a survey and this has become an established relationship over a number of years and helps ensure good quality data.

Research in June 2022 showed that attitudes had changed dramatically from pre-war times. The number of donations had grown tenfold, and numbers of volunteers had grown six times. However, this was a peak, with most money collected in February and March 2022, and declining subsequently. They recognised the need to build a strategy to help make giving more sustainable.

They found that levels of trust among Ukrainian donors is higher with volunteer groups than institutions, but institutions are more sustainable, so there is a need to nudge people to give more to institutions. Zagoriy Foundation use the research to support grassroots civil society organisations to professionalise their reporting and communication so they can improve their support base and level of influence.

Currently they are researching burn-out among employees of charitable organisations: what is the risk relationship between the number of hours worked, or location, or other factors? This would be to inform donors on the support they could provide to mitigate these impacts. In the future, they hope to look at the role of business in philanthropy.

Through their work they have become an analytical centre representing Ukraine internationally among other philanthropy organisations.

The Global Prioritisation Exercise (GPE) for Humanitarian Research and Innovation aims to improve outcomes for people affected by crisis by amplifying the impact of investments in research and innovation through understanding the priorities at all levels. It will provide an overview of the progress and performance of the humanitarian research and innovation ecosystem with a clear set of priorities for research and innovation funding and attention.

elrha

VISIT US
elrha.org

CONNECT WITH US
/Elrha

FOLLOW US
@Elrha

GET IN TOUCH
info@elrha.org

Elrha, 1 St John's Lane, London, EC1M 4AR, UK.

Elrha is registered in England and Wales as a charity (charity number 1177110) and as a private limited company by guarantee (company number 11142219).