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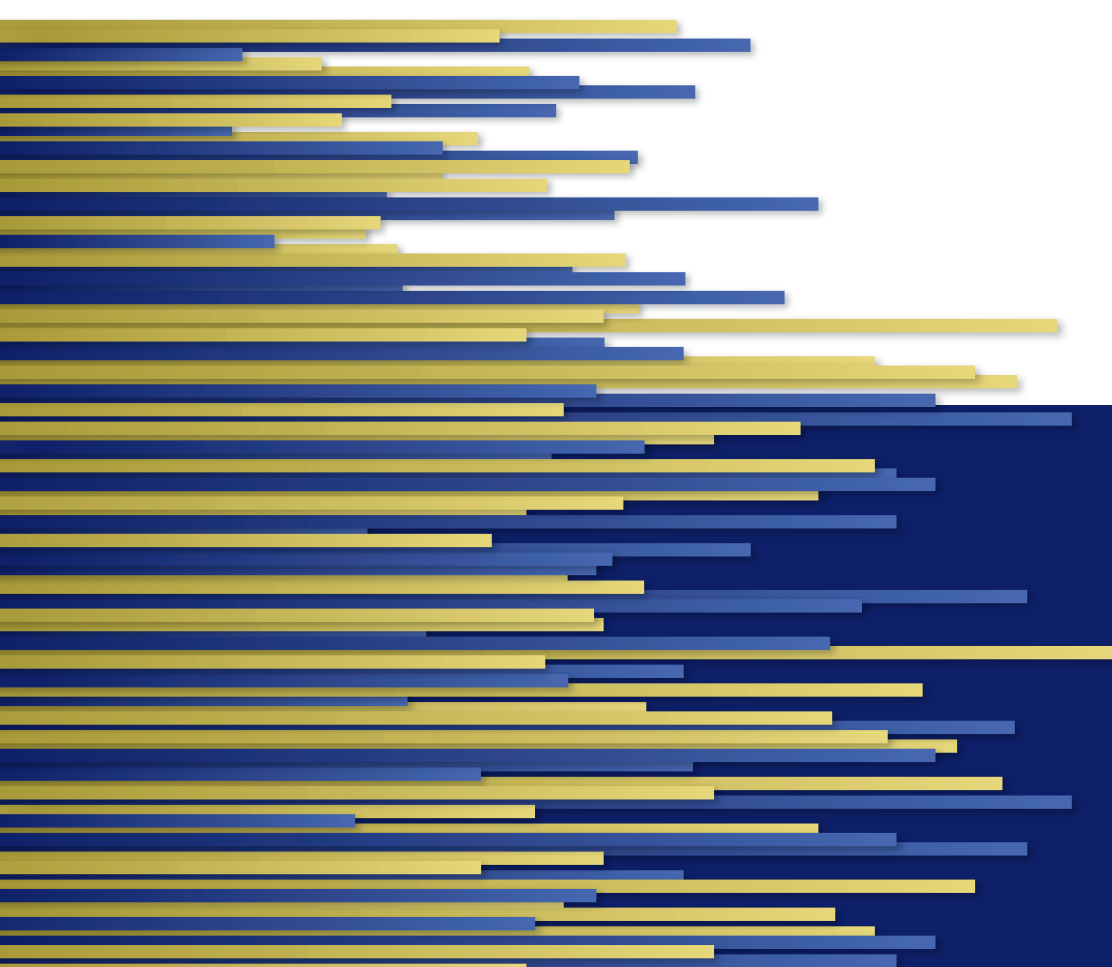
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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN UKRAINE

ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE MAIN DIRECTORATE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IN LUHANSK OBLAST

(BRIEF)



This report contains the findings of an assessment of the institutional capacity of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Luhansk Oblast, including studies of work activity management, human resources, interaction with the community, logistics and maintenance support and other factors. It also includes some conclusions and recommendations for improving the work of the police in the oblast.

A special original toolkit has been developed to implement this assessment. The questions therein were based on the provisions of the UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology and the Criminal Justice Assessment Toolkit created by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, taking into account the specifics of local legislation and the system of management of governmental authorities.

The information was obtained from responses to inquiries and was collected during interviews with key members of the police in Luhansk Oblast. In total, 37 in-depth interviews were completed between October 2019 and February 2020.

This report may be useful to law enforcement officers and representatives of local authorities, international and national NGOs, as well as to anyone interested in community safety and the population's involvement in law enforcement in Ukraine.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

- 1.** Despite actively working with the communities of Luhansk Oblast, police activities are carried out under a strictly centralised model. The National Police set the key priorities of their activities by narrowing down possible interactions from the outset.
- 2.** The police in Luhansk Oblast have achieved a high level of cooperation between the Main Directorate of the National Police and the Directorate of Patrol Police that goes beyond their joint participation in the common response system and the work of mobile groups responding to domestic violence cases. They provide mutual support during emergencies and participate in joint planning, regular coordination of action plans, and raids on areas along the “contact line”.
- 3.** The police in Luhansk Oblast regularly report to communities and work with the public to implement numerous initiatives aimed at improving safety in the region. This has a positive impact on the level of trust and the number of police calls.
- 4.** Luhansk Oblast police require radical reforms of the situation centre and regional video surveillance system. The collection of data about events is carried out using outdated technologies. This is further complicated by the inability to make landline calls from many settlements, the small number of surveillance cameras, and the lack of channels and equipment for transmitting and processing data.
- 5.** Luhansk Oblast police are still recovering from the events of 2014, when significant resources and personnel were lost during the outbreak of the armed conflict and the temporary loss of control over Luhansk. The strictly centralised financing system and lack of funds mean that the majority of needs remain unmet. In addition, there are state-imposed restrictions on procurement and expenses. Thus, the police are constantly looking for funds for renovations, repairs, furniture, transport vehicles, office equipment and personnel. This necessitates the reallocation funds designated for routine work. In order to continuously patrol settlements (especially remote ones), there is a need to increase fuel limits and the number of vehicles. Many territorial units need repairs, furniture, and office equipment.
- 6.** Police officer salaries are not competitive for the region, there is an ever-increasing workload arising from understaffing, and there is a continuing shortage of vehicles and a need to save fuel. As a result, there will be a growing need for new police stations and mobile police forces that can move quickly from one settlement to another. Some communities will participate in the Community Police Officer Programme during the year, under which they will have a police officer working permanently and solely in their community.
- 7.** Luhansk Oblast police invest significant resources in developing their personnel's professional skills and conduct regular special courses not covered by the standard system of police officer training. Medical training, communication skills, conflict de-escalation techniques and effective means of communication with wider society are among the most in-demand training courses for police in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** The Community Police Officer Project needs further development, as it can be the first step towards the decentralisation of police services and developing communities' capacity to create an environment for maintaining their local police force. The project also requires regulatory work, as the lack of such regulations further compromises the sustainable development of the project.
- 2.** In view of the poor interaction between law enforcement agencies, it is necessary to subordinate the Directorate of Patrol Police to the Main Directorate of the National Police, while the head of the Directorate of Patrol Police would become the Deputy Head of the Main Directorate of the National Police. If this is found to be impossible, it will be necessary to conduct regular organisational and training work aimed at strengthening cooperation between the police directorates (the Main Directorate of the National Police and the Directorate of Patrol Police) in order to ensure safety in the region by developing lateral communication and forming new types of co-operation.
- 3.** New opportunities and strategies aimed at gradually involving citizens in the protection of public order should be created. This will allow the further redistribution of certain tasks (for example, prevention and awareness-raising) to community representatives.
- 4.** The situation centre of the Main Directorate of the National Police of the oblast requires further development. Increasing the numbers of smart video cameras, received data processing capacity, and data transmission systems will not only enable faster responses to events and crimes, but will also help to collect information that may later play a key role in criminal investigations, the prosecution of criminals and witness identification. It is necessary to gradually improve the situation centre's potential by increasing video camera coverage in the oblast, strengthening the capacity of data collection and processing systems, training professionals and creating advanced data collection channels. More attention should be devoted to the analytical capabilities of the centre when developing its capacity, i.e. increasing staff potential.
- 5.** Given that not all communities are able to keep a police station and their own police officer, it makes sense to develop mobile police station projects, especially for work in remote districts and areas close to the "contact line", which will improve access to the police.
- 6.** Staff training requires regular attention. First aid, mine safety and unexploded ordnance, police tactics, weapons handling and shooting remain the most popular police courses today. Training with air and airsoft weapons and situational training are also important.