

## Ukraine

### “Your Rights” Mobile Phone App

IDPs in Ukraine can easily access information about their rights on their mobile phones. In 2018, UNDP Ukraine, as part of the United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme,<sup>1</sup> developed a smartphone app called, “Your Rights” for IDPs and gender-based violence (GBV) survivors.<sup>2</sup> The free downloadable app generates practical solutions and legal pathways for them to restore their rights and receive redress. After answering a series of questions in the app to clarify their specific situation, IDPs receive step-by-step guidance on how to protect their rights, including the contact details of free legal aid providers.

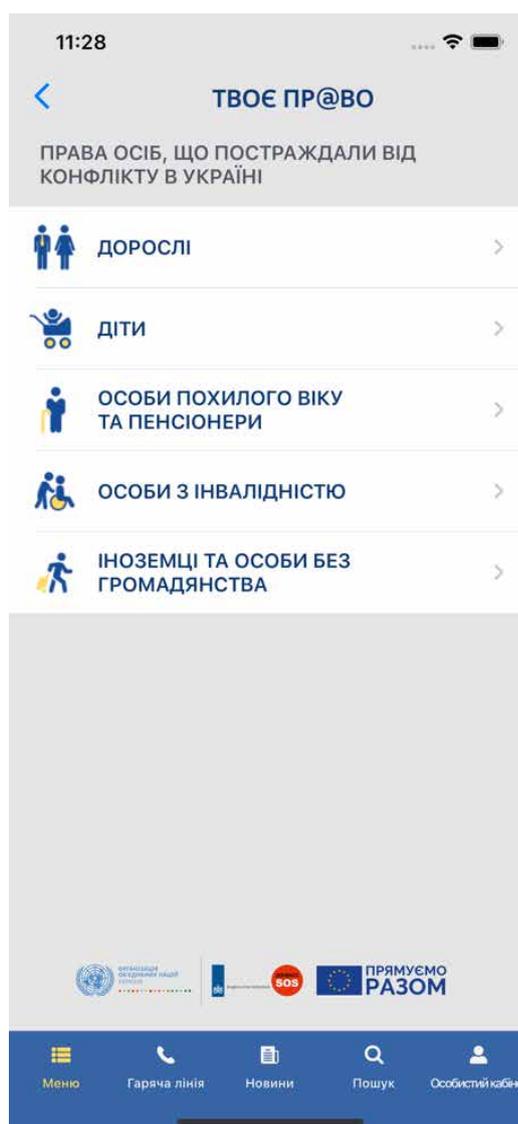
One of the app’s IT developers, Denys Kliuchko, found that the app was simple enough for his parents in their late 60s and

early 70s to use. In Spring 2014, when the armed conflict began in eastern Ukraine, the Kliuchko family had left their native town of Pervomaisk, Luhansk Oblast, located in a non-government-controlled area (NGCA), to keep their jobs at a coal mining company that had moved to the town of Hirske, Luhansk Oblast, in a government-controlled area (GCA). Kliuchko installed the app on his parents’ smartphones, which he said changed their lives. Even offline, his parents could access sample and draft documents, applications, and claim forms, which enabled them, for example, to apply for utility subsidies or obtain an IDP certificate. Prior to the app, many IDPs had relied on untrustworthy media sources and rumours, because local authorities were not always able to provide updated information.

The “Your Rights” app also explains procedures for traveling across or close to the contact line between GCA and NGCA. For instance, in 2019 Denys Kliuchko travelled from Kyiv to visit his parents in Hirske, located close to the contact line. According to his parents’ neighbours and colleagues, he would need to present a number of documents (such as a work certificate, guarantee letter from his employer, and income certificate) to pass through military checkpoints. However, according to the mobile app, only a valid passport was required. Denys Kliuchko subsequently visited his parents using only his passport, without being asked to show any other

document. He observed, “Because of the app, there is less fear and more confidence. It reduces the level of anxiety and gives you an understanding of your rights in the conflict area.” His parents also encouraged others in Hirske to use the app.

In 2020, UNDP transferred the app to the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, a national level legal aid institution housed in the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, for further development and continued support. The Coordination Centre plans to use the app as an expanded platform to unite and coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders working on other legal aid issues in Ukraine.



## Endnotes

1 The United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP) is being implemented by four United Nations agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 'Recovery & Peacebuilding' (*UNDP Ukraine*) <<https://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/recovery-and-peacebuilding.html>> accessed 22 June 2020.

2 With contributions from IOM and Ukrainian civil society organizations (Donbas SOS, La Strada Ukraine and Yurydychna Sotnia (The Legal Hundred)), subsequent versions of the app have been updated to help protect the rights of people who often cross the contact line, ex-combatants of the anti-terrorist operation (ATO)/joint forces operation (JFO) security operations, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those affected by human trafficking. Financial support is provided by the European Union and the Governments of the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland.