
Project**“Towards safe, healthy and declared work in Ukraine”****Psychosocial support at workplace in war and post-war times****Trainings for labour inspectors of the State Labour Service of Ukraine****April-May 2022**

Following the consultations with the State Labour Service (SLS) management and within the Project repurposing, as approved by the donor, 10 online trainings on psycho-social support (PSS) at workplace in war and post war time were conducted for the labour inspectors.

REPORT**RELEVANCE**

Having ratified a whole range of the ILO Conventions on occupational safety and health (OSH) and having undertaken to approximate its national legal framework on OSH to the EU standards (within the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement framework), Ukraine shall promote safe and healthy working conditions.

On the 10th of June 2022 the International Labour Conference adopted the decision according to which the right to a safe and healthy working environment is now part of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. That means that all ILO Member States will have an obligation to respect and promote safe and healthy working conditions in the same manner and with the same level of commitment as the four principles already covered by the ILO Declaration.

Mental health is a part of general human health and is as important as a physical one. During a war and post-war times, it is a key focus in support of the able-bodied population as well as in business resilience and productivity. Psychological issues faced by workers which lead to absenteeism, presenteeism, etc., cause losses for employers. Besides, they result in a higher risk of work-related accidents which are also another source of losses for businesses.

Mental health is as important as physical health. Psychosocial support to workers became particularly important during the hostilities. It will be in great demand after the war as well. It is important to build a holistic system of psychosocial support based on tripartite cooperation between the government, employers and workers to maintain business sustainability and to care for workers' safety and health.

A labour inspector has direct access to workers and employers during visits to enterprises either to inform or to inspect, to ensure compliance. He/she can provide informational and advisory back-up to psychosocial support programmes, initiate a talk on benefits of such a support at workplace, and create conditions for good practice exchange. A labour inspector needs relevant knowledge and skills to stay in a resource condition amid war and be effective in promotion of psychosocial support programmes at workplace.

Following up from consultations with the SLS management, and as part of the Project's repurposing, 10 trainings on psychosocial support at workplaces in war time were delivered (the topic was extended during the trainings to cover the post-war period).

OBJECTIVE OF THE TRAININGS

Support mental health of the trainees with account of consequences of war, and strengthen the labour inspector's role in elaborating ways of advocacy for psychosocial support programmes at the enterprise level.

TASKS OF THE TRAININGS

- Provide basic knowledge and skills for delivery of first PASS in war and post-war time context.
- Familiarize participants with the concept of psychosocial support at workplace, and develop paths for effective communication with employers on the development and implementation of psychosocial support programmes at enterprises.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Trainees:

- understand peculiarities of human psychology during the war and what can be influenced to minimize risks of development of severe emotional and behavioural disorders;
- are informed on evidence-based methods of emotional stabilization during crisis periods, and are able to use the methods for psychological self-recovery;
- know the conditions of, and are able to use the principles of first PSS provision;
- are able to distinguish human stress responses and to provide first PSS;
- know what and how to say when providing first PSS;
- have access to contact information to refer an individual in need of specialist aid;
- understand that a programme of psychosocial support at workplace is a necessary instrument for systemic care for every worker's mental health during war and in post-war times;
- are able to overcome communication barriers when interacting with employers and workers as regards implementation of a programme of workers' mental health support at workplaces, with account of war time and available resources.

TARGET GROUP

In total, 10 trainings involved 198 staff of the State Labour Service of Ukraine directorates – labour inspectors from Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi, Zakarpattia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Sumy oblasts and the Eastern Interregional Directorate, including 68 men and 130 women (see *Annex* for more information).

METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

The following interactive teaching methods were used during the training: discussion, brainstorming in session rooms, interactive lectures using a PPT presentation, practical assignments, and case studies.

The following information tools and information handouts were developed and used:

- interactive PPT presentation;
- information handouts for the trainings:
 - fist PSS in various stress-caused emotional responses;
 - list of sources where free specializes psychosocial support can be obtained;

- information handouts for the trainings: programme of psychosocial support at workplace: recommendations for development and implementation”;
- questionnaire for evaluating the pre- and post-training levels of knowledge on the subject;
- trainings quality evaluation questionnaire (close-ended and open-ended questions).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Relevance of the subject

The subject proved to be relevant and useful to the participants both as individuals to maintain their own mental state effectively amid the war, and as labour inspectors to feel more confident when communicating with employers and workers in need psychosocial support. In particular, 91% of the respondents rated usefulness of the information provided with 5 points, no-one stating that the information was useless.

Results of the first four online trainings showed the need to extend the training duration to 5 hours to cover the questions most relevant to the participants, namely:

- how can knowledge of human psychology during war help manage stress;
- how do news affect the level of stress: useful recommendations for self-control;
- what are a labour inspector’s specific actions for advocacy of psychosocial support at the enterprise level, taking war conditions and consequences into account.

Including these questions in the training programme showed how much acutely the participants needed emotional support and specific recommendations as regards initiating a talk with employers and their teams concerning psychosocial support at workplace. The highest barrier, as the training participants pointed out, is that employers still accept a labour inspector’s visit to an enterprise for the purpose of control only. Labour inspectors note that important information tools in advocacy for this matter should include an guidance on effective communication with enterprise leaders and recommendations for employers and their teams concerning the development and implementation of psychosocial support at workplace programme.

Based on analysis of the participants’ feedback and comments during the training, the dominant information needs were related to psychological stabilization (e.g. how to overcome stress-driven panic during an air raid alert) and methods of psychological self-recovery (e.g. how to work smoothly while having disturbing thoughts, or how to plan the future amid war). It is this subject that the training participants asked the largest number of questions on, and they were most active in exchange of their experiences of stress management in a war situation.

Usefulness of online training

Although online training during 5 hours has its shortcomings, all the participants noted the convenient form of information material presentation and the interactivity in learning, namely the chance to voice their opinions, share their experiences, and develop joint projects in groups. Examples of participant feedback on this are provided in *Table 2*.

The training revealed certain differences between participants from eastern and western oblasts in stress management. On the one hand, the participants who had already been IDPs¹ earlier and had experienced traumatic implications of the war in the East since 2014, shared with other participants how much that experience helped them act correctly and mentally stabilize themselves faster. On the other hand, for people

¹ IDPs – internally displaced persons

from all regions the consequences of this phase of war are much more severe, all got unexpected negative experience not known before. It is worth providing trainings on stress management, separate from other themes, preferably offline, to be able to examine case studies in more detail, share stories and experiences, and practice various techniques and methods for mental self-help.

З іншого боку, наслідки війни зараз набагато важчі для них, так само як і для учасників з інших регіонів України, неочікуваний і невідомий до сьогодні негативний досвід. Варто проводити окремі від інших тем тренінги, бажано в офлайн-форматі з питань управління стресом для того, щоб мати можливість більш детально розбирати кейси, ділитися історіями та переживаннями, практикувати різні техніки та практики для психологічної самодопомоги.

Opportunities for advocacy of psychosocial support at workplace and next steps

The topic of benefits of, and barriers for implementation of the PSS at workplace programmes in war and post-war times should be written down in detail in the information kit for a labour inspector that will become an instrument for effective advocacy of such programmes. Besides, to process as many problematic issues concerning the PSS design and implementation ways as possible, an additional training on PSS advocacy should be delivered, preferably involving representatives of employers and trade unions.

The trainings showed that even 5 hours is not enough to embrace the range of items envisaged by the programme. There is not enough time to discuss and practically master the question of developing, and ways of implementing, a PSS at workplace policy and programme.

It was found during the training that one of the PSS advocacy tools could be a SLS website page providing information on psychosocial support at workplace, which would be useful not only to workers but also to trade union leaders and employers with their teams. Besides, some participants proposed to introduce the position psychologist within the SLS and consider possibilities for introduction of psychological support for staff of the State Labour Service.

The key focus of this training programme is on strengthening the labour inspector's role in providing information and advisory assistance to enterprises in the organization of psychosocial support on a continuous basis. This envisages developing a relevant workplace policy, which would become a clear signal to all the staff that psychosocial well-being of every worker, both man and woman, is a priority.

Additional information needs of the participants for future activities

A particularly important part of the training and anonymous questionnaire survey consists of the opportunity to gather information about the participants' other needs for a situational analysis and planning of next steps. The outcomes showed that the thematic assignments of the training had enabled the participants to take a wider perspective of psychosocial risks at work. In particular, they are interested in the following: introducing questionnaire surveys at workplaces for affected workers to analyze their emotional condition for obtaining specialist aid, arranging information activities concerning "life after war", etc.

Final session based on outcomes of 10 trainings

A final 2-hour online session for 200 labour inspectors was carried out. Key tasks set for the session consisted of discussing results of the trainings and analyze information needs (see *Table 3*) for implementation of further measures in advocacy for a PSS at workplace programme.

Analysis of the participants' information needs showed that the problem of professional and emotional burnout is the acutest one to labour inspectors (56.5%), which is most likely connected with the fact that they

were absolutely not ready to communicate with a large number of employers and workers who were under stress because of implications of the war. Some participants pointed out that they had been conducting inspection visits together with a psychologist because their own internal resources had been not enough. This need is connected with another topic, relevant to them, namely communication barriers in interaction with employers and workers (54.1%). The labour inspectors stated that the main barrier is connected with their low self-confidence as to supporting the people who survived a loss and/or are in the area of hostilities. Therefore, 40% mentioned importance of providing mental health first aid. Besides, some participants noted that they had not enough instruments to communicate with an employer concerning promotion of a PSS at workplace programme. For example, implementation of such a programme remains a topical issue, therefore almost 40% of respondents stated they would like to learn about good practices in this field.

In general, the participants pointed out at the final session that the trainings had helped them understand their own emotional state amid the war and use methods helping them maintain psychological resilience. After the trainings, the participants analyzed the situation at enterprises in terms of the psychological state of employers and workers, interviewing them during visits to the enterprises. As a result, actually all the participants stated that there is a need in PSS at workplace programmes, but not all employers understand how to organize that. Several participants pointed out, however, that some enterprises had already undertaken certain fragmented workplace actions to support their workers' psychological state and were ready to share their experience with other. Hence, a labour inspector can become an efficient tool not only for providing information and advisory back-up to workplace psychosocial support programmes but also for collecting data on successful practices and placing the information at a website to motivate other leaders and exchange experience.

FEEDBACK

Results of the questionnaire survey for evaluating the subject awareness level before and after the trainings are presented in *Table 1*. Feedback on training quality and proposals are provided in *Table 2*. Conclusions and recommendations based on the outcomes of 10 trainings are presented above.

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT BEFORE AND AFTER THE TRAINING

Table 1. level of knowledge before and after the training

Questions	Results (number of correct answers BEFORE and AFTER the training)
1. What does the “first PSS” concept mean?	34.5 75 Before After
2. Should an individual necessarily have psychological education to provide first PSS?	93.9 98.3 Before After
3. Is it necessary to provide first PSS to all the people experiencing a crisis situation?	40 98.5 Before After
4. Which actions DO NOT relate to first PSS? Choose one or more answers	37.5 95.5 Before After
5. What are principles of providing first PSS?	59 99.5 Before After

The general level of the participants' knowledge of the subject increased by 40% on average after the training. The level of their knowledge concerning whether first PSS should be provided to all the people in a critical situation increased by 58.5%. Results of questionnaire surveys before and after the trainings showed that almost all the respondents (97%) understand that PSS can be provided to everyone possessing relevant knowledge and skills, even having no psychological background. At the same time, a vast majority of the respondents did not know what actions the PSS provision consists of. After the training, the general level of knowledge in terms of this indicator increased by 58%. Besides, the general level of knowledge concerning basic principles of PSS provision increased by 40.5%.

Table 2. General quantitative and qualitative analysis of feedback provided by the participants of 10 trainings based on an anonymous questionnaire survey

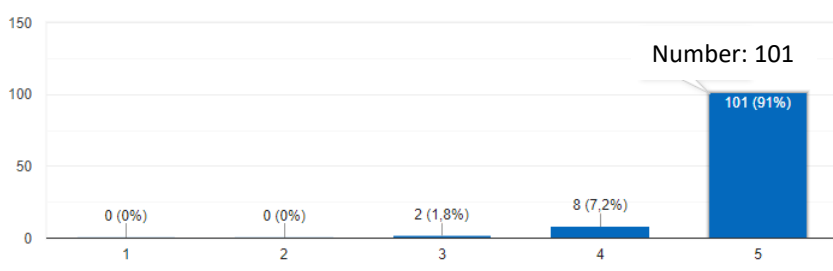
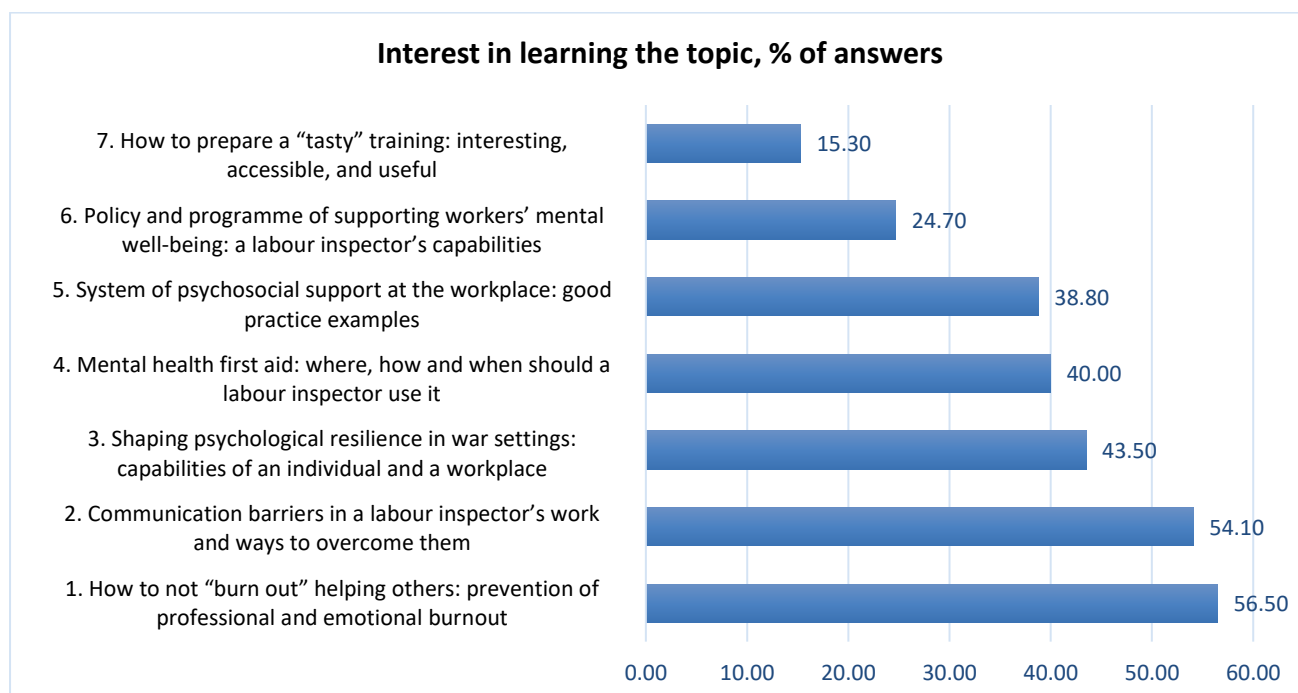
Questions	Result (quantitative and qualitative)																		
1. What was successful to you at the training?	Participants noted: - form of teaching - trainer’s competence - information material content - methods of work Examples of answers: “The form of teaching is comprehensible and easily perceived... clearly in essence and in simple words...” “Information material is interesting both for work and daily life...” “Training in the form of dialogue is rather effective...” “There is feedback, group work, an opportunity for discussion...” “Practical assignments help concentrate...” “Valuable information that needs to be brought to every workplace...” “It was very useful to see stress reduction practices and understand how I can help other people...” “Information is provided in a succinct and graphical form...” “Pleasant communication and systemic presentation of information...”																		
2. How much useful the information provided was to you? Evaluation based on 5 points range: 1 – very bad, 2 – bad, 3 – average, nothing special 4 – good, 5 – very good	91% of the respondents rated usefulness of the information provided with 5 points, and no-one stated that the information was useless.  <table><thead><tr><th>Rating</th><th>Number</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>0</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1,8%</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>8</td><td>7,2%</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>101</td><td>91%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Rating	Number	Percentage	1	0	0%	2	0	0%	3	2	1,8%	4	8	7,2%	5	101	91%
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4	8	7,2%																	
5	101	91%																	
3. What are your proposals concerning future trainings or other forms of information and training activities?	Some participants provided their recommendations and proposals, namely: - more practical exercises and situational assignments - provide such trainings for managers - provide all participants with technical capacity for online training (camera and microphone) - possibility of reading handouts prior to the training - deliver such trainings offline - introduce workplace questionnaire surveys for affected workers to analyze their emotional state for obtaining specialist assistance - have a psychologist within SLS (like at private enterprises) and consider possibilities for introduction of psychological assistance at the State Labour Service - arrange information activities concerning “life after war”																		

Table 3. Results of an anonymous questionnaire survey on labour inspectors' information needs for planning of future information and training activities



Annex. Sex-disaggregated data on the number of participants

Trainings on PSS at workplace for the labour inspectors of the State Labour Service of Ukraine

No.	oblasts	date	number of participants	M	W	M (%)	W (%)
1	Ivano-Frankivska, Zakarpatska	26.04.2022	16	9	7	56.25	43.75
2	Lvivska, Chernivetska	27.04.2022	21	12	9	57.14	42.86
3	Chernivetska, Ternopilska	03.05.2022	17	6	11	35.29	64.71
4	Chernivetska	04.05.2022	17	10	7	58.82	41.18
5	Dnipropetrovska, Khersonska, Sumska oblasts and Eastern region (Donetska, Luhanska)	10.05.2022	22	5	17	22.73	77.27
6	Chernivetska, Kyivska, Mykolayivska	11.05.2022	23	4	19	17.39	82.61
7	Poltavska, Volynska	13.05.2022	19	6	13	31.58	68.42
8	Khmelnytska, Rivnenska, Zaporizhska	17.05.2022	20	6	14	30	70
9	Kirovogradska, Vinnytska	18.05.2022	22	6	16	27.27	72.73
10	Odeska, Zhytomyrska	20.05.2022	21	4	17	19.05	80.95
Total			198	68	130	34.34	65.66

Project
“Towards safe, healthy and declared work in Ukraine”
Training for labour inspectors of the State Labour Service
«Psychosocial support at workplace in war and post-war times»
April-May 2022
10:00-15:00

Training №1: 26 April – Ivano-Frankivsk, Zakarpattia regions

Training №2: 27 April – Lviv, Chernivtsi regions

Training №3: 3 May – Ternopil, Chernivtsi regions

Training №4: 4 May – Chernivtsi region

PROGRAMME

10.00 – 10.05	Welcome on behalf of the ILO Project
10.05 – 10.10	Welcome on behalf of the SLS
10.10 – 11.30	Introduction Workers in war time: psychosocial aspect Psychosocial support at workplace: what labour inspectors can do
11.30 – 11.40	BREAK
11.40 – 13.00	Stress/distress: how to take care of oneself Methods of psychological recovery
13.00 – 13.20	BREAK
13.20 – 15.00	<i>First psychological aid: conditions, principles and basic skill of providing consultation</i> <i>Policy/programme of psychosocial support at workplace: possibilities of the enterprises (resources for development and implementation)</i> Q&A Wrap up
15:00-15:10	<i>Closing</i>