



# Completely unusual 2022. How did we work and what did we achieve?



The team and partners of the Healthlink project are used to doing the impossible and the incredible – especially during this extraordinary period in the history of the indomitable nation.



The full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine has been going on for over 10 months. In addition to the fighting on the front line, missile attacks on all regions of the country do not stop. As a result, critical and civilian infrastructure is damaged, hundreds of innocent people die every week, and the urgent needs of a huge number of Ukrainians grow every day.

Millions of people are forced to live not only with constant power outages but also with limited access to water supply and heating. Hundreds of thousands of residents of communities, where Ukraine regained control, are in a terrible humanitarian situation. **World Bank says 25% of Ukrainians are below the poverty line, as of December, 2022. And the number could rise to as high as 55% by the end of 2023.**

as of January 1, 2022

## 41M people lived in Ukraine

as of December 27, 2022

**~7,9M people**  
became refugees to  
European countries

**~6,5M people**  
internally displaced

**17,7M people**  
in need

**~16M people**  
of water, sanitation and hygiene assistance

**~9,3M people**  
of food and livelihood assistance

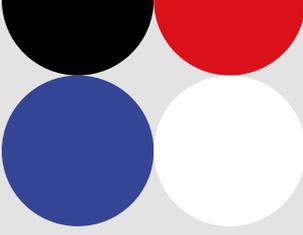
**~3,4M children**  
of child protection interventions



17,595 civilian casualties  
including 6,826 killed



~16,000 missile attacks  
97% of targets are civilian



### ~14,5M people

are estimated to need health assistance

- 1 in 5 Ukrainians couldn't get the medication they needed; in temporarily occupied and active conflict areas this increases to 1 in 3 people
- the major barriers to accessing health care are cost, time constraints to get to and from health facilities, as well as limited transport availability
- 33% IDPs need medicines and health care services



### ~1 billion USD

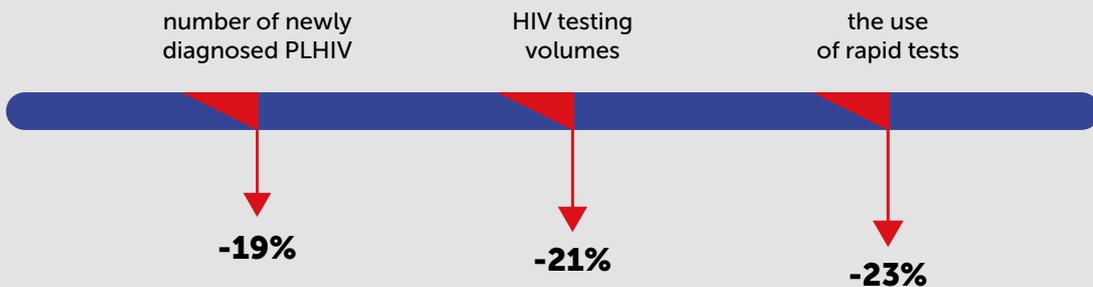
the estimated amount of damage caused to HCFs

- ~725 attacks on HCFs, warehouses, transport, supplies
- ~1250 HCFs were damaged, another ~150 completely destroyed

## HIV in Ukraine

- ~245,000 PLHIV
- every third PLHIV doesn't know his/her status or remains without medical care and treatment
- ~129,000 people received ART
- 65% of PLHIV acquired HIV sexually (62% through heterosexual contact, 3% – through homosexual)

### In 2022 ~11,000 new HIV cases were detected. Compared to 2021:



### Tens of thousands of PLHIV are at risk of treatment interruption



air alarms and shelling



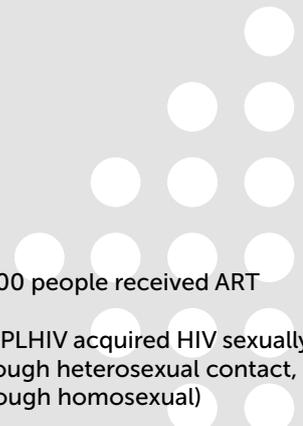
complicated logistics of drug delivery

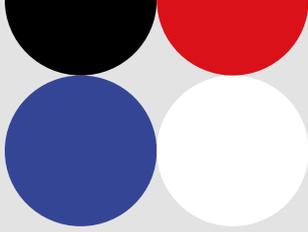


forced relocations and loss of contact with their doctors



lack of access to medicine in temporarily occupied and active conflict areas





# HealthLink: Accelerating Ukraine's Efforts to End HIV

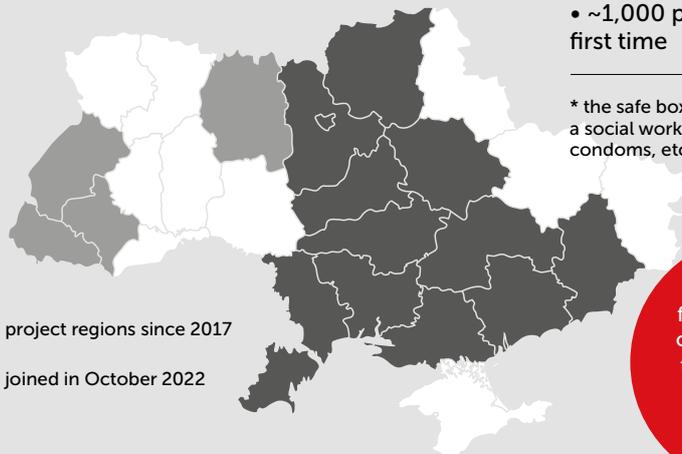


**most likely the largest and the most efficient project  
in the field of public health in Ukraine**

for 5 years

- since October 2017
- 1 in 3 newly diagnosed PLHIV in the country was tested within the project
- ~750,000 tests were carried out by medical workers
- ~600 HCFs, 27 NGOs, ~10,000 specialists
- over 600 community testing sites

- ~866,000 people were tested, 21,000 of them were tested positive
- ~75,000 quick oral tests were distributed, of which ~9,000 were distributed online via [prozdorovia](#), and another ~3,500 via vending machines
- ~36,000 safe boxes\* were distributed
- ~15,000 partners of PLHIV were tested, and ~3,000 of them learned about their HIV+ status for the first time
- ~17,000 people have received ART
- ~1,000 people have received PrEP for the first time



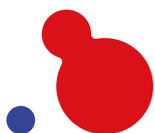
- project regions since 2017
- joined in October 2022

\* the safe box contains an oral test, instructions, contacts of a social worker, useful brochures, a sticker pack, may contain condoms, etc



## Objectives:

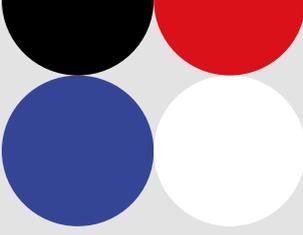
- ☑ overcoming the HIV epidemic by using a quick and safe HIV testing and starting the treatment
- ☑ improving access of PLHIV and KPs to HIV testing, prevention and treatment services
- ☑ reducing stigma and discrimination against PLHIV among the general population and health workers



[prozdorovia.in.ua](http://prozdorovia.in.ua) is the first Ukrainian-language public health portal that created the opportunity:

- **for hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians** to choose the most convenient method and place for HIV testing, PrEP counselling, oral test order

- **for specialists of NGOs and the medical community** to receive constantly updated useful materials for viewing online and downloading



# What did the project team achieve in 2022?



Despite the difficult working conditions, staff migration and damaged sites, Project managed to restore testing volumes and increase testing yield by the end of 2022



**217 HCFs** provided HIV testing services



**~3,500 people** learned about their HIV+ status for the first time

**68%** aged 30-54

**61% men 39% women**  
(according to the project analysis, men aged 30-50 are a priority group for HIV detection)

**65%** general population  
**35%** key groups representatives

**22%** are index partners  
(family members, children under the age of 18, sex and injecting partners of PLHIV)

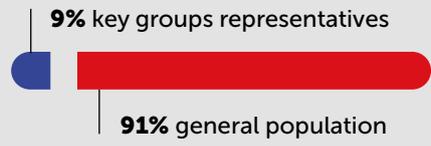
**~3,200 people received ART for the first time**

**25 HCFs were damaged** as a result of hostilities

10% HCFs are located on the **temporarily occupied territories**

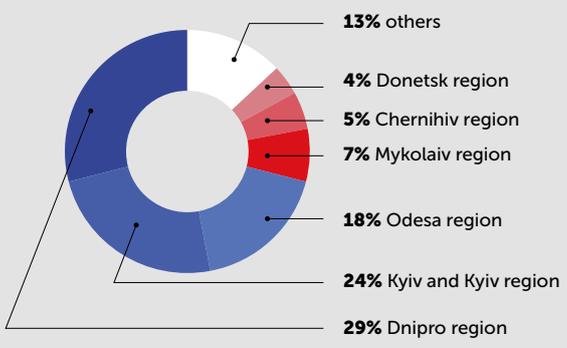


**~83,000 people were tested for HIV**



**57% men 43% women**

Where did people get tested the most?

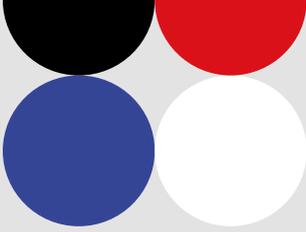


Despite the difficult situation, **the most active in providing public health services were precisely the regions affected by a full-scale war**



## Key challenges:

- lack of basic security to conduct full-fledged activities
- lack of human resources and an extremely high workload for those who remained working
- complicated logistics due to damaged urban infrastructure
- loss of contact with many beneficiaries
- great need for material resources, as the number of beneficiaries has increased due to IDPs
- uncertainty regarding further work and psycho-emotional exhaustion of workers



## How did we work?

### Inspiring stories of HealthLink regional partners



The inflow of IDPs significantly increases the challenges for regional partner organizations. It is extremely important to help people who need support and guidance in an unfamiliar place quickly and effectively. In addition to health problems, these people have a lot of related unresolved issues. However, our teams miraculously manage to combine everything: comprehensively provide assistance to new clients without reducing the volume of support for existing ones.

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all names have been changed

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### From diagnosis to treatment in 2 days

Ukrainians are incredibly indomitable people. Even during regular shelling, they continue to work and help those in need. In such life-threatening conditions, the employees of CO "Chernihiv Network" provided treatment to a client who had just been diagnosed with HIV and HCV.

Mykhailo underwent free HIV testing within of the HealthLink project. He was an active drug user, and couldn't cope with this habit on his own. All earned money was constantly spent on "street drugs." When a social worker told the man about the possibilities of medication-assisted treatment (MAT), Mykhailo seized the last chance to get out of the closed circle. He got all the necessary diagnostic tests and started ART and MAT.

***"I didn't know how to get the necessary treatment and considered it unrealistic for me. Now every day I feel how my health is improving. There is no longer any need to look for drugs, and the money earned is directed to the needs of my family"*** says the man.



### Shelling of Mykolaiv. When overcoming challenges becomes routine

Starting from February 24, MSM activities were suspended in Kherson and Donetsk regions and continue to be very limited in Mykolaiv region, which is in a heavily-shelled front-line zone. A large number of local residents and medical staff left the city of Mykolaiv.

Despite the active hostilities, Victoria – the medical professional of the CO "Association LGBT "LIGA", continued to provide HIV testing and other services for MSM at the basis of the Trust Office in Mykolaiv. More than 40% of all testing services were provided here. Out of all new positive cases, almost 87% started ART. At the same time, Victoria's colleague, who works as a psychologist in an organization within the HealthLink project, continuously provided help to clients both online and offline.

all names have been changed



## From denying the diagnosis to living a full life with HIV

Andriy is an intelligent young man who knows enough about HIV. Long before the diagnosis, he suspected that he might have been infected with HIV a few years ago, but was afraid to get tested to get the final answer.

When he got to a hospital with an opportunistic disease, the doctor prescribed an HIV test. Since then, Andriy has become a friend of the CO "100% LIFE. DNIPRO". Since he was not ready to come to terms with his disease, he was offered the help of a project psychologist, peer-to-peer consultations, and support for six months: so that during this time he can accept his status and the fact that he will have to take ART for life.

With the beginning of the war, Andriy realized that he would not be able to defend Ukraine with a weapon in his hands. But he couldn't sit idle either, so he started volunteering. Having his own clothing stores, at first, together with a social worker, he helped with clothes for the rehabilitation center and the wounded, then took things for displaced persons and the military. Later, he created a website to help refugees with finding housing, providing them with necessary medicines, and many other issues. Andriy not only "didn't get lost" in this life, but also managed to show his best qualities. We are proud of him and glad that the invested efforts gave such good results!



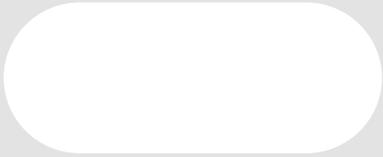
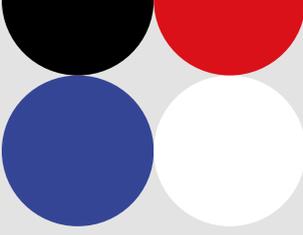
## "I met a man who has HIV. We are together now"

Oksana moved from Donetsk to Pavlohrad in 2014. She went through a terrible period: the occupiers entered her hometown and ATO began. Her husband supported the establishment of the so-called "DNR" and remained in the city. He hasn't been in touch since then.

Six months ago, the woman began to get frequent colds. Then she caught COVID-19 and was hospitalized. She had a very high temperature and lost 10 kg. Doctors couldn't find the cause of this condition until they finally received the results of the HIV test. During those 15 minutes of waiting, Oksana's whole life flashed before her eyes. Positive status.

The woman was alone in the hospital, where everyone was trying to save her. The news about HIV was followed by a new diagnosis – pulmonary tuberculosis. Immunity was extremely weakened because HIV had greatly affected Oksana during the years before she learned about her status. A social support consultant regularly visited the hospital, and later accompanied Oksana to the AIDS Center for registration and initiation of ART. Thanks to this support, Oksana was able to accept her status and start making plans for her future life.

***"I am very grateful to Olga from CO "100% LIFE. DNIPRO", who was by my side during the difficult moments of my life. She did not turn her back on me, sympathized, helped, and was in touch 24/7. Now I met a man who is also living with HIV and taking ART. He assures me that I am strong and great. We have become a couple!"*** – Oksana shared.



# CO '100% Life' the largest patient-led organization in Ukraine

after February 24, 2022:



continues to operate in all regions of Ukraine,  
where it is possible

**~\$810,256 of additional funds**  
were raised thanks to new  
institutional and private donors,  
and crowdfunding campaign

medical center '100% of Life'  
**became a humanitarian hub in Kyiv**

**5 shelters** have been organized  
in Lviv, Rivne, Chernivtsi,  
Ivano-Frankivsk

**~210,000 ARV treatment packages**  
were delivered to Ukraine thanks to  
allocated ~\$13M by the PEPFAR  
program

**~150,000 PLHIV** have been provided  
with therapy for the coming year

**~30 tons (53 million doses)** of drugs  
delivered to different regions

**~150 portable and classic  
generators** delivered to the regions

**~38 tons of food** were  
delivered to hospitals

**~1M food kits and ~17,000 food  
purchase certificates** distributed  
in 15 regions to the most  
vulnerable people

**~6,500 individual first-aid kits**  
were handed over to Territorial  
Defence Forces, Armed Forces of  
Ukraine and doctors

**~6,000 bulletproof vests** were  
given to ambulance drivers,  
doctors and social workers

**3 electric vehicles** were  
purchased for evacuating  
people, transporting medicines  
and humanitarian aid

**equipment from 4 hospitals** in  
Donetsk and Luhansk regions was  
evacuated

100% LIFE