The Standby Partnership Joint Monitoring Exercise Report – Ukraine Crisis

2022

SBP

Standby Partnership

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Acronym list

CBI – Cash Based Intervention

CCCM – Camp Coordination and Camp Management

DRC – Danish Refugee Council

DSS – Dutch Surge Support

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

GBV – Gender Based Violence

IM – Information Management

IOM – International Organization for Migration

KII – Key Informant Interview

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MHPSS – Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

MSB – Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

NGCA – non-Government-controlled Areas

PSEA – Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

SBP – Standby Partnership Network

SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

TOR – Terms of Reference

UK FCDO – United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

UN – United Nations

UN OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WFP – World Food Program

WHO – World Health Organization

ZIF – Center for International Peace Operations

1. Executive summary

The purpose of the joint monitoring mission was to assess the overall Standby Partnership (SBP) contribution to United Nations (UN) operations responding to the Ukraine crisis. This exercise would also serve as an evidence-based analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current SBP system and help identify ways forward to improve the SBP Mechanism as a whole.

All UN Agencies acknowledged that without the support provided by the SBP mechanism and deployees, their organization would not have been able to deliver and implement vital humanitarian programmes with the same quality, speed, and scale.

The SBP joint monitoring exercise focused on three key areas:

Part A: Impact and performance

The UN Agencies reported that 70% to 75% of the SBP deployees had a highly satisfactory performance for the entire duration of their assignment, both in terms of technical skills and interpersonal skills. Based on this performance and continued need for support, around 70% of the deployments were also extended. The remaining 30% were considered satisfactory with some reservations mainly related to technical skills, language skills, work ethics, behavioral attitude, cultural awareness, and lack of knowledge of the organizational structure.

On the other hand, 90% of the deployees who responded to the survey mentioned that they believed they made a substantive contribution to UN operations through their work and 75% of them agreed with the statement 'I was able to complete my tasks within the assigned time'.

Part B: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations

The majority of the UN Agencies have reported that they will seek additional support from the SBP mechanism in the coming six months. The identified areas of future support are: winterization, cluster coordination, WASH, cash-based interventions, shelter, engineering, child protection, mental health, translation, information management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Due to the current and potential escalation of the crisis all the UN Agencies interviewed acknowledged that these needs may increase and change in the near future.

Several recommendations to enhance the current system in place emerged from interviews and focus group discussions with UN Agencies and the SBP deployees. These recommendations can be found on pages 19 and 20 of this report.

Below is a summary of the most relevant recommendations:

Administration

- UN Agencies and SBP partners to review logistical and administration arrangements (i.e. expenses coverage, visa issuance, provision of UN Certificate, extensions);
- Provide organization introductory package prior to the deployment;
- Conduct an informal 'chemistry call' with potential deployee and UN supervisor prior to final selection, in order to discuss the expectations of the role; SBP partners to conduct a reference check of the deployees.

Security

- The UN Agency to provide more practical briefings and trainings on security and safety, and conduct these within the first two weeks of the deployment;
- UN Agencies to ensure that evacuation details are included as part of the security briefing/training;
- UN Agencies to ensure clearer information on UN cleared accommodations in hardship duty stations are provided to deployees.

Strategic

- SBP partners should review deployee CVs in more detail before sharing them with the UN Agencies, to make sure they are in line with the request;
- UN Agencies should provide more detailed and flexible TORs;
- Work-plans should be prepared with UN supervisor and SBP deployee;
- Road map and exit strategy should be developed by UN Agency to ensure sustainability of the positions covered by SBPs;
- UN Agencies and sending partners should consider six months as minimum length of deployment to ensure expected results can be realistically achieved;
- Make sure the SBP mechanism is fully institutionalized within UN Agencies as one of the main surge mechanism available in emergency responses;
- UN Agencies must ensure that capacity building of long-term staff is part of the SBP deployees TOR;
- Sending partners should include capacity building/ coaching/ mentoring of long-term staff as part of the SBP deployees duties.

Duty of care

- SBP partners should conduct periodic monitoring field visits to assess deployees well-being;
- An online platform to connect deployees could be established to foster communication amongst the experts based in the same duty station;
- Sending partners to review their pay and benefits package to ensure they are in line with other similar packages;
- Sending partners to ensure that deployees have access to thematic and technical trainings prior to the deployments.

Part C: Operational and implementation challenges

Several challenges emerged from interviews and focus group discussions with UN Agencies and the SBP deployees. These challenges can be found on page 21 of this report.

Below is a short summary of the challenges:

Main operational challenges

- Visa procedures for certain nationalities;
- Lack of UN ID or UN Certificates for deployees in certain UN Agencies/ missions; timeframe of some deployments was too short;
- The SBP mechanism is not fully institutionalized within all the UN emergency response plan.

Main implementation challenges

- Integration of the SBP deployees within the UN Agency team;
- Lack of specific language capabilities on the SBP's rosters;
- Deployees actual experience not matching experience on their CV;
- Lack of a sustainable staffing plan and exit strategy for the roles covered by SBP deployees;
- SBP mechanism not always institutionalized within UN Agencies' emergency response plans.

Sunflower Center, Chisinau, Moldova

2. Humanitarian context

Ukraine has seen intense fighting since 24 February 2022 following attacks from the Russian Federation. This has led to a humanitarian crisis, with millions of people requiring immediate humanitarian aid and protection, in Ukraine and in surrounding countries. In addition to devastation caused by conflict in Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic are faced with high numbers of refugees seeking safety and assistance.

During the month of September 2022, the fighting and shelling continued in the east and south of Ukraine, with multiple civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure reported. Meanwhile, in the Russian Federation, the partial mobilization was announced on 21 September, and the so-called referendums on joining Russia took place between 23 and 27 September in the non-Government-controlled areas (NGCA) of Luhanska and Donetska oblasts, as well as in parts of Zaporizka and Khersonska oblast invaded after 24 February.

At the same time, humanitarian access in the areas of Kharkivska oblast back under the government of Ukraine's control has notably improved, allowing humanitarian organizations to organize several aid convoys.

Due to the ongoing conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine over the last eight years, some UN Agencies and partners have already been in place assisting vulnerable communities, whilst other UN Agencies and humanitarian partners have faced the challenge of responding to a new emergency in a new country.

Similar challenges have been faced by partners setting up new operations in the affected neighboring countries in and outside of the EU. Since 24 February, the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund has allocated US$91 million to 55 humanitarian projects, targeting 4.9 million people. As of 13 July, the UN and partners have reached 10.3 million people across Ukraine (OCHA, 21 July 2022). According to UNHCR, as at 12 July, 9.2 million refugees have fled Ukraine, whilst IOM is reporting 6.3 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) inside Ukraine (OCHA, 21 July 2022). *[1]*

[1] www.unocha.org/ukraine

Meeting with UN OCHA, Lviv, Ukraine

3. SBP joint response to the Ukraine crisis

Due to the large extent of the crisis in Ukraine, many SBP partners decided to provide in-kind contributions through SBP deployee support, to UN Operations in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.

Since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis, 128 experts have been deployed to 10 UN Agencies in Ukraine (70), Moldova (26), Poland (15) and to other countries (17) by a total of 16 SBP partners. *[2]*

An interesting data is that 94 requests were made by UN Agencies since the beginning of the conflict, specifically between February and March 2022, confirming that the SBP mechanism served as first and/or second wave of surge. Out of these requests, 82 were filled and 39 were deployed withing three to four weeks from the selection. This first wave of SBP deployees in Ukraine, Poland, Moldova and Hungary.
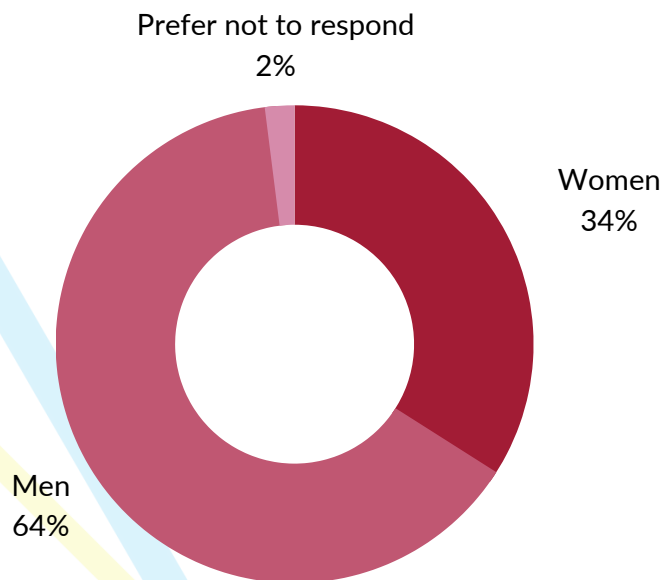
During the first quarter of the crisis, the main profiles requested were in the sectors of coordination, information management, shelter and mental health. More technical posts were requested from April onwards.

[2] This data might not be 100% accurate since the unique identifier is not yet adopted by all Agencies and partners. This might result in a few duplications. Last update October 2nd, 2022.

List of UN Agencies and SBP partners involved in the Ukraine response

UN Agencies	SBP Partners
FAO (1)	CANADEM (32)
IOM (5)	DHL (3)
UN OCHA (25)	DRC (11)
UNESCO (1)	DSS (4)
UNFPA (13)	Ericsson Response (7)
UNHCR (41)	THW (3)
UNICEF (15)	Fuel Relief Fund (1)
UN WOMEN (1)	iMMAP (17)
WFP (11)	Irish Aid (4)
WHO (14)	MSB (13)
	NORCAP (16)
	RedR Australia (7)
	SDC (5)
	UK FCDO
	UK MED (1)
	ZIF (2)

Gender of deployees

Prefer not to respond
2%

Women
34%

Men
64%

UN grades of positions filled

P2
3%

P4
40%

P3
57%

Deployee age groups

	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Above 64
%	20%	37%	25%	14%	2%
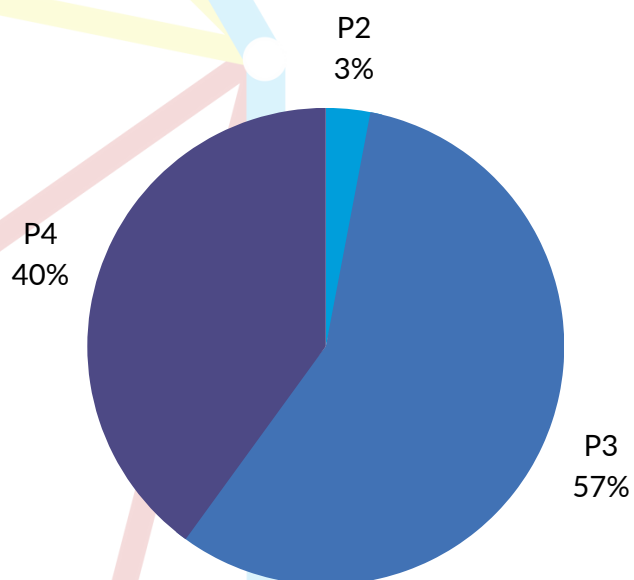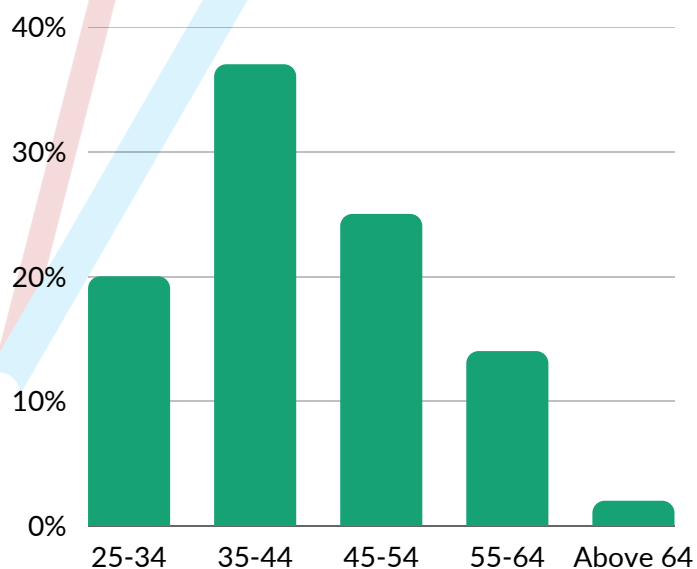
Deployees' region of origin

Regions (left to right): Northern Europe, Western Europe, Western Asia, Northern America, Eastern Africa, Eastern Europe, New Zeland, Southern Asia, Southern Europe, Southern America, Central Asia, Northern Africa, Southern Asia
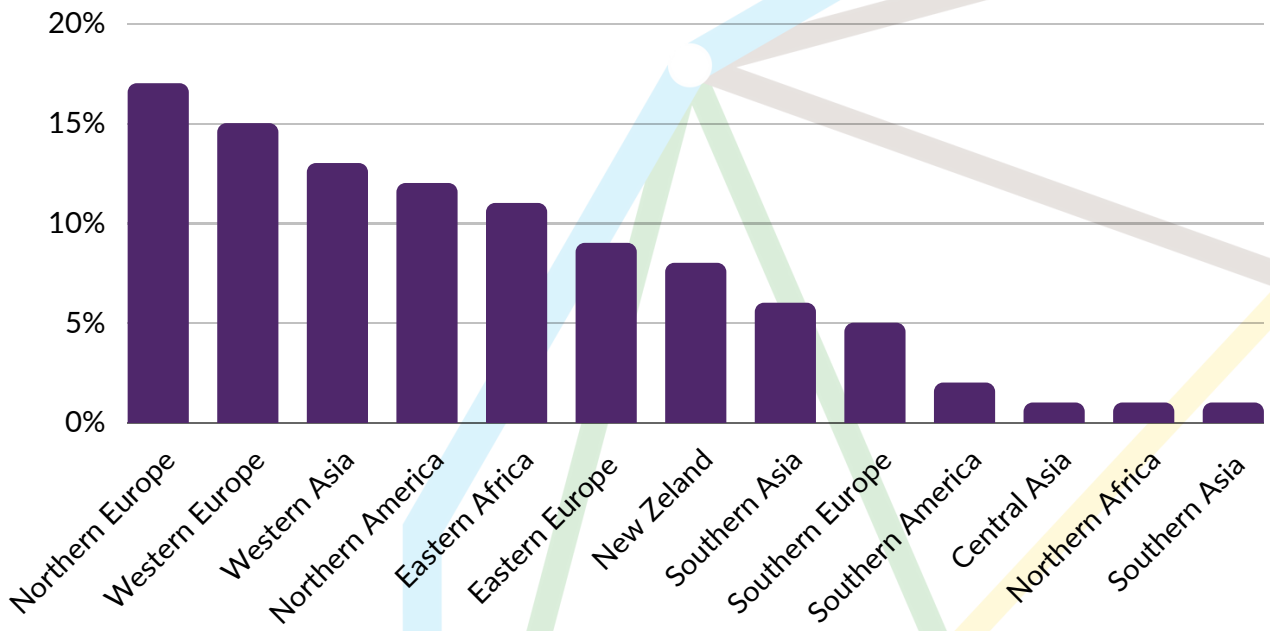
Top deployed profiles per UN Agency

Legend: FA0, OCHA, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, IOM, UN WOMEN

Profiles (left to right): Information Management, Logistics, Humanitarian Coordination, Protection, WASH, Shelter, MHPSS, ICT, PSEA, Administration, Gender
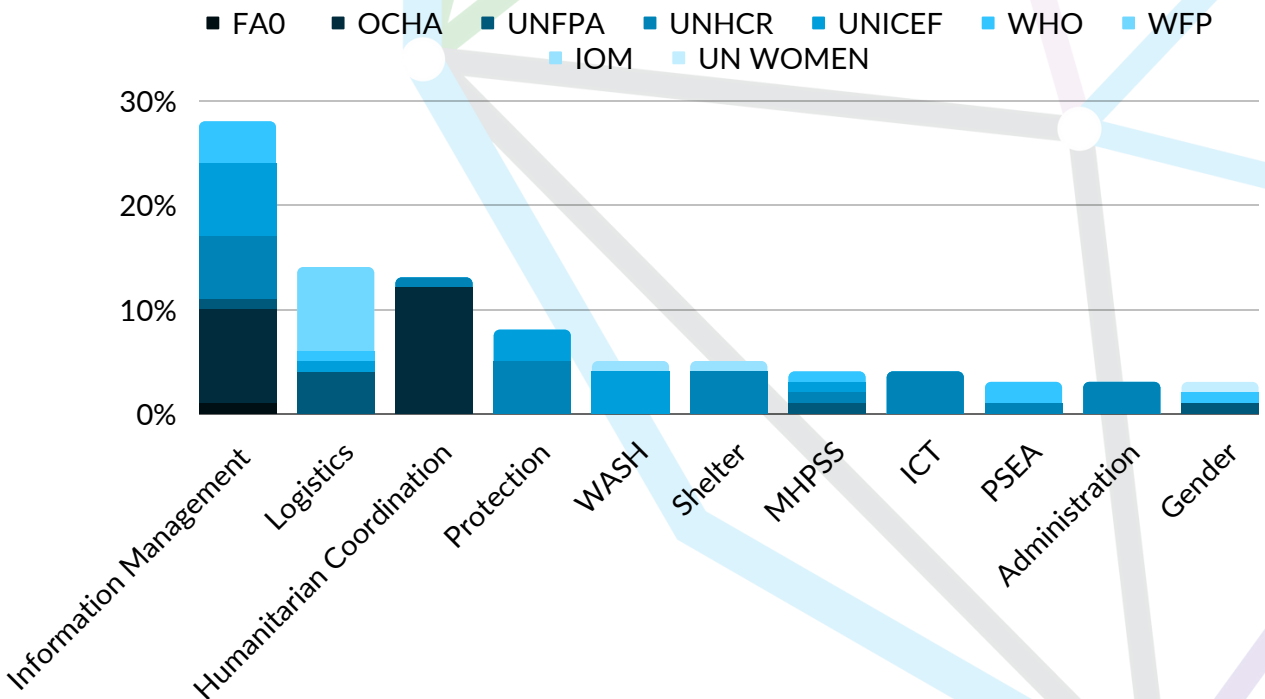
4. SBP joint monitoring mission purpose

Approach

Over recent years the SBP Network has been agreed that, where the activities and objectives of SBP partners align for a particular humanitarian response, joint monitoring missions may add value to both individual Agencies and the broader partnership. Perhaps most critically, joint missions minimise the burden on country offices of hosting and/or supporting concurrent missions by SBP Partners.

Following an initial discussion with SBP partners at the SBP Network Annual Consultation in May 2022, a core group was established by the SBP Network Secretariat in the early summer to lead on the development for a Terms of Reference (TOR) and the planning of a joint monitoring mission. The core group comprises representatives from OCHA, UNHCR, WHO, DRC, NORCAP, UK FCDO, MSB, and the SBP Secretariat.

The overarching objective of this monitoring mission was to assess the SBP mechanism overall support to UN Agencies responding to the crisis in Ukraine, and surrounding countries.

The findings are reported against the three focus areas identified as core elements of the overall monitoring exercise:

Part A: Impact and performance
Part B: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations
Part C: Operational and implementation challenges

Methodology

The SBP joint monitoring mission methodology relied on a variety of data collection tools and several sources of data (mixed-method approach), in order to capture the different aspects in play in relation to the SBP deployments and will respond to the three key focus areas mentioned above. The mixed-method approach provides a broader spectrum of ways to better understand complex contexts, to reach a high number of respondents, and to address complementary questions that were not possible to investigate using one single methodology.

This approach enabled to cross check data received from the UN Agencies (supervisors, HR and admin focal points, senior management) and the SBP deployees in Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, and other neighboring countries.

The monitoring exercise was conducted in a hybrid modality with:

- surveys and part of the interviews conducted remotely; and
- interviews with UN Agencies Senior Management and focus group discussions with deployees conducted in person in Ukraine, Poland and Moldova.

OCHA and UNHCR supported the field missions by providing in-country logistical assistance and iMMAP provided an in-kind vehicle for the entire mission in Ukraine.

The field mission in Ukraine took place from September 17th to September 23rd with the participation of OCHA, MSB, DRC, NORCAP, and the SBP Secretariat. The field mission in Poland and Moldova took place from October 3rd to October 7th with the participation of UNHCR, NORCAP, WHO, DRC, UK FCDO, and the SBP Secretariat.

The first phase of the monitoring exercise consisted of a desk review of the SBP data sheet and the list of deployees provided by the UN Agencies.

The rest of the analysis relied on the following methodology:

1) Online perception surveys: this phase relied on the launch of two perception surveys, one shared with 44 UN focal points out of which 17 responses were collected and one shared with 125 SBP deployees out of which 58 responses were collected. The surveys were launched in early August 2022.

2) Key Informant Interviews (remote): Fourteen semi-structured remote interviews conducted with SBP deployees during the last week of August and the first week of September 2022; 2 semi-structed remote interviews conducted with UN focal points during the first week of September 2022.

3) In-country Interviews: Sixteen interviews conducted with UN staff during the third week of September in Ukraine and first week of October in Poland and Moldova.

4) In-country Focus Group Discussions: Three FGDs conducted with 16 deployees in Ukraine, Poland and Moldova between September and October 2022.

Meeting with UNHCR, Lviv, Ukraine

5. Review findings

As previously mentioned, the findings were collected through an in-depth triangulation of data received through surveys, Key Informant Interviews, informal interviews, and Focus Group Discussions and reported against the background of the three focus areas.

Part A: Impact and performance

SBP deployees' most significant contribution to UN Operations

All the UN personnel interviewed agreed that the SBP deployees made a valuable contribution to the UN operation. The UN Agencies acknowledged specifically that their organization wouldn't have been able to deliver and implement with the same quality, speed, and scale without the SBP deployees on the ground.

"

> **'SBPs made a substantial contribution to our operation on the ground'**
> UN Senior Management

Meeting with UNICEF, Kyiv, Ukraine

It was noted that 90% of the UN Agencies used the SBP mechanism as the second wave of surge staffing where the first wave was represented by the internal roster.

UN Agencies reported that 70%/75% of the SBP deployees had a highly satisfactory performance for the entire duration of their assignment both in terms of technical skills and interpersonal skills. Based on this assessment and on the increasing needs on the ground, around 70% of the deployments were also extended.

The remaining 30% was considered satisfactory with some reservations mainly related to technical and language skills, work ethics, behavioral attitude, not adaptation with the context, lack of knowledge of the organizational structure.

During interviews the UN Agencies acknowledged the specific added value that the deployees brought to their organization:

- Bringing fresh ideas, a different perspective and experience, new approach to resolve problems
- Positive and proactive attitude in hardship contexts
- Strengthening capacity building of national staff or newly recruited staff
- Bringing their technical and interpersonal experience gained in different contexts
- Being able to temporarily close gaps in UN recruitment process
- Representing a cost-efficient hiring mechanism for the UN organization especially in crisis context where the UN long recruitment processes may affect the efficiency of the Agency's work on the ground
- Bringing specific functions and expertise not available in internal rosters
- Longer term deployments (up to 1 year) compared to internal surge (typically 4-12 weeks depending on the UN Agency)
- Being available to deploy to in hardship duty stations relatively quickly

> *'We couldn't have run the mission without SBPs'*
> UN Senior Management

> *'SBP deployess have helped us in areas where we do not have the expertise'*
> UN Senior Management

> *'When we see the quality of some candidates, we want to extend immediately…'*
> UN Senior Management

Meeting with IOM, Kyiv, Ukraine

Main results achieved by SBP deployees

Overall, 90% of the deployees mentioned in the perception survey that they have made a substantive contribution to UN operations through their work and 75% of them agreed with the statement 'I was able to complete my tasks within the assigned time'.

These findings are in line with the feedback received from UN Agencies which have acknowledged they would not have been able to achieve the same results without the support of the SBPs.

Below the list of the SBP deployees main achievements so far:

- Setting up a country wide system for protection monitoring (i.e. disability data, referrals)
- Provision of protection and PSEA trainings for national and international partners
- Setting up of IM systems covering several clusters (i.e. protection, wash…)
- Establishment of GBV prevention programmes
- Establishment of reporting and communication units
- Construction of tent camps for refugees
- Establishment of the first MHPSS Technical Working Group
- Establishment of the Environment Working Groups
- Introduction of GBV trainings in the health sector
- Establishment of CCCM cluster system for shelters and housing units construction
- Setting up the monitoring / reporting tool for Implementing Partners
- Establishment of supply chain systems
- Establishing field presence in several locations, including setting up of offices
- Capacity building of local staff

Most of the deployees mentioned that the main contributing factors for achieving expected results were:

- Having supportive supervisors
- Good leadership
- Relevant experience in similar roles
- Accurate TORs
- Support from national staff
- Regular meetings with authorities
- Having access to the organizational IT Systems
- Clear workplan
- A good induction from the sending partner.

> *'The collaboration with my line manager and with the cluster coordinator was great since day one'.*
> SBP Deployee

> *'My plan is to build capacity of local staff in order to leave knowledge'*
> SBP Deployee

FGD with deployees, Chisinau, Moldova

Part B: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations

Emerging needs

All the UN Agencies reported that they are currently working on their strategic priorities for the coming six months to one year and that they are maintaining a certain level of flexibility in planning due to the nature and status of the crisis.

During interviews, the monitoring team asked UN Agencies to share their potential needs for the near future for SBP partners to be better prepared to respond to upcoming requests.

Ukraine

OCHA: The conversation on future needs and priorities will start in October/November 2022. The Agency forecasts more targeted interventions in specific locations and a stronger focus on social protection. OCHA also started initial conversations on the humanitarian-peace-development nexus with the support of the government. Finally, depending on how the conflict will evolve, OCHA plans to start supporting the non-accessible areas.

WHO: The Agency is already working on a set of priorities for the coming months and the areas where they will need surge capacity are physical rehabilitation, war surgery, mental health, health cluster coordination, supply logistics, store keeping, data and reporting, interpretation and translation, M&E, and cancer treatment.

UNICEF: The Agency will probably adopt a two-pronged approach, based on geographical areas. West – recovery and contingency areas in the case of increased conflict, invasion of Odessa, and road blockages towards Moldova. East – conflict areas with high risks, frontline response, limited accessibility. In both geographical areas, UNICEF forecasts requests in the sectors of health, wash, child protection, and IM. The Agency mentioned that the needs assessment is still ongoing so these needs may change. In the next months they also expect to have more conflict related activities in the east, especially in Odessa and Vinnitsya.

IOM: The Agency was able to find long-term solutions for most of the core functions but due to the status of the conflict they still forecast additional requests in the sectors of: operations, M&E, IM, recovery solutions, CBI, shelter and WASH, winterization, MHPSS.

UNHCR: For the coming six months UNHCR forecasts more requests for winterization, WASH, shelter coordination, protection, durable solutions and CBI. UNHCR looks for profiles that are usually not available in their internal rosters.

Poland

WHO: For the coming six months WHO forecasts requests in the sectors of logistics, mental health, IMO, disability rehabilitation and older persons; risk communication; and PSEA.

UNHCR: The Agency is currently well staffed, there is one pending information management officer and a possible request in the sector of advocacy. The UNHCR strategy is to look for longer-term solutions.

Moldova

UNFPA: The Agency used the SBP mechanism at the beginning of the crisis and they also requested extensions for several deployees. including warehouse Management and Procurement. For the near future they are looking for long-term solutions.

UNHCR: For the coming six months UNHCR forecasts requests in the sectors of shelter, communication, mental health, cyber security-trafficking and GBV and they are also exploring activities in the humanitarian-peace-development nexus; the needs assessment is still ongoing so these needs may change.

UNICEF: From January 2023 the Agency will focus more on the humanitarian-peace-development nexus with needs in the sectors of technology for development, climate change, Gender, GBV and WASH.

IOM: The Agency is currently recruiting national staff but they may have future needs in the sectors of shelter/site planning and wash.

WHO: The Agency did not request SBP deployees in the past months and prioritized other internal surge mechanisms. For the coming SIX months to one year they forecast requests in the sectors of M&E and IM.

As a general note, the UN response to the Ukrainian crisis is adopting the localization agenda linked to the humanitarian-peace-development nexus and it is therefore focusing more into durable solutions within specific geographical areas.

> *'Sustainability of SBP positions needs more attention of partners and UN Agencies, if there is not a clear road map the support could be lost'*
> SBP Deployee

> *'Need to strengthen reference checks, for good and bad'*
> UN Senior Management

Recommendations to the SBP Network

Administration and operation

- Many deployees requested more clarity on logistics and administrative arrangements within SBP partners and UN Agencies. Most of the contracts do not specify which entity is in charge of expenses for internal missions and while HR at HQ-levels were informed, the administration units in the country offices often were not. One of the solutions could be to develop a clear guidance document on the roles and responsibilities of sending partners and UN Agencies.
- Deployees recommended the UN HR and administration units to invest more resources in supporting the SBP partners to request visas especially for deployees coming from "difficult" nationalities.
- Both deployees and UN Agencies mentioned that providing UNLP or UN Certificate to all deployees to legitimize their presence on the ground should be mandatory. The UN Certificate is to be requested by the UN Agency and to be facilitated by the UN Secretariat.
- UN Agencies requested to know in advance which SBP partner is allowed to extend deployments.
- Most of the deployees requested to receive by the UN Agency an introductory package and check list on the host organization internal procedures and working tools a few weeks prior to the contract initiation.
- Both deployees and UN Agencies at CO recommended having an informal interview with the candidates to reduce the mismatch of profiles. Some UN Agencies also suggested the SBP partner complete a reference check before sending the CVs and this mechanism should be standardized for each deployment.
- Deployees requested to be informed by both SBP partners and UN Agencies about the possibility of an extension at least 4 weeks in advance
- Many UN Agencies inquired on the possibility to get national SBPs, especially to overcome the language barrier. One of the solutions could be to amend the MoUs between SBP partners and UN Agencies to allow the deployment of national experts.
- UN Agencies to develop more specific TORs in line with the position requirements and context.
- UN Agencies to revise TORs along the way especially for deployees paid per deliverable.
- Add the possibility of "roving duty station" on the TOR for the deployees to be aware that the location of the assignment may change

> *'One recommendation is the visit of the sending partner upon deployees arrival to the country and come up with solutions if procedure are not in place'*
> SBP Deployee

Security

- UN Agencies to ensure that UNDSS provides practical briefings and trainings on security and safety, within the first two weeks of the deployment;
- UN Agencies to ensure that evacuation details as part of the security briefing/training;
- While these security briefings are normally conducted by UNDSS, where UNDSS is not present, individual UN Agencies should ensure that adequate security briefing and any eventual support are provided to the SBP deployees;
- UN Agencies to ensure clearer information on UN cleared accommodations in hardship duty stations are provided to deployees;
- UN Agencies to ensure that the SBP deployees have the contact details of their security warden.

Strategic

- The SBP Secretariat to reactivate the Ukraine Response live tracker to get a clearer overview of the UN Agencies requests. Positive feedback was received on the use of tracking UN needs in real-time;
- Closer follow-up on the CVs from the sending partner to avoid mismatches. Some UN Agencies mentioned that the deployees had a highly satisfactory theoretical experience but not enough practical experience. As mentioned above, some UN Agencies recommended the SBP partners to undertake a reference check as part of the SBP partner vetting process;
- Ensure the capacity building of national and/or newly recruited staff is part of the SBP deployees TOR if this is expected as part of the role;
- UN supervisor and SBP deployee to prepare a clear workplan during the first weeks of the assignment;
- UN supervisor should work with the deployee on a road map for ensuring the sustainability of the position;
- UN Agency to ensure full integration and equitable treatment of the SBPs within the organization;
- SBP partners and UN Agencies to consider six months as minimum length of deployments for the deployee to properly understand the context, achieve the expected results and build capacity of local staff. Longer deployments were also strongly encouraged by most of the UN Agencies since they facilitate visa issuance as well;
- UN SBP focal points at HQ to ensure that the SBP mechanism is fully institutionalized within the UN emergency response plan.

Duty of care

- SBP partners to organize more field visits to assess deployees well-being;
- SBP partners to consider flexible contract modalities especially for caregivers;
- SBP partners to consider ways to promote communication amongst deployees, such as an online platform to connect SBPs deployed to the same duty station;
- Contract modalities: SBP partners to consider reviewing their salary and benefits package in line with the current market; flexibility of contracts in terms of leave days and benefits like dependents allowance was also raised by many deployees;
- SBP partners to ensure that the deployees have access to thematic and technical trainings. List of online or in person trainings to be shared with the deployees in due time.

Part C: Operational and implementation challenges

As part of the methodology the monitoring team asked the SBP deployees and UN Agencies to list the main operational and implementation challenges encountered so far.

Operational challenges

- Visa procedures for specific nationalities;
- Lack of UN ID or UN Certificate in some UN Agencies which limited the movements in the country (especially in hardship duty stations);
- Timeframe of deployments: Some deployments took 40 to 50 days from the time the request was made by the UN country office to the time the deployee was in-country. An in-depth analysis on when the bottlenecks occur should be conducted by both UN Agencies and sending partners;
- In some cases, the SBP mechanism is not fully institutionalized within the UN emergency response plan. More advocacy should be made to ensure that the UN Country Offices are aware of the SBP mechanism.

Implementation challenges

- Integration of the deployees within the UN team was a challenge for 30% of the deployees. This issue should be addressed by the UN Agency prior the SBP deployee arrival;
- Local language skills are required for some roles. It was very difficult to deploy Ukrainian or Russian speakers which may have negatively impacted field operations;
- Around 30% of the deployees reported that the onboarding process was not satisfactory, especially in relation to administrative support and introduction to internal procedures of the UN Agency;
- Some deployees did not abide by the UN impartiality rule;
- Because of the contract modality many deployees do not have access to organizations' IT and administrative tools and this affected their overall performance;
- In 25% of cases the SBP profiles didn't match the expectations of the UN Agency. Some UN Agencies suggested to the partners to have a closer follow up on the CVs to ensure that the deployees have the proper experience and technical and soft skills to fulfill their tasks. It is recommended that the UN country office conducts a 'chemistry call' with their selected deployee to ensure that they represent a right fit for the office and programme;
- 50% of the deployees mentioned that they did not work with their supervisor on a clear exit strategy for the positions they covered. Most of the deployees involved in the interviews and focus group discussions recommended the UN Supervisors have a clear handover/capacity building plan in place to ensure the sustainability of the positions;
- The majority of the UN Agencies interviewed at country offices reported their difficulty in finding national staff with relevant skills.

6. Conclusions, recommendations and steps forward

Conclusions on the SBP contribution to UN operations

- It was acknowledged that SBP deployments enabled UN Agencies to rapidly scale up their operations on the ground that may not have been possible without this support. The SBP support provided a critical mix of technical, emergency, leadership and cultural skills during this crisis;

- Many SBP deployees covered critical roles and filled coordination positions within the UN Agencies and at the Inter-Agency level. For example, some deployees initiated entire field offices operations, coordinated clusters, set up Information management systems, conducted trainings on PSEA, GBV, MHPSS and protection mainstreaming;

- The main added value of SBP deployment mechanism to UN operations was delivering highly qualified personnel able to bring fresh ideas and new ways of thinking; technical and interpersonal experience; positive and proactive attitude in fragile contexts; capacity building and mentoring; temporarily closing gaps in UN recruitment processes; providing specific functions not available in internal rosters; longer deployments (up to 1 year) compared to internal surge (typically 4-6 weeks).

Looking at the future needs, the below sectors were prioritized by the UN Agencies involved in the monitoring exercise:

Country	Agency	Future needs
Ukraine	OCHA	Nexus humanitarian-development-peace
	WHO	Physical rehabilitation; war surgery; mental health; health cluster coordination; supply logistics; store management; data and reporting; interpretation and translation; monitoring and evaluation; cancer treatment
	UNICEF	Health; WASH; child protection; information management
	IOM	Operation; monitoring and evaluation; information management; recovery solutions; cash-based interventions; shelter; wash; winterization; MHPSS
	UNHCR	Winterization; WASH; shelter; coordination; protection; durable solutions; cash-based interventions

Country	Agency	Future needs
Poland	WHO	Logistics; mental health; information management; disability rehabilitation and older persons; risk communication; PSEA
	UNHCR	Information management and Advocacy
Moldova	UNFPA	N/A
	UNHCR	Shelter; communication; mental health; cyber security-trafficking; GBV
	UNICEF	Technology for development; climate change; Gender; GBV; WASH
	IOM	Shelter/site planning and WASH
	WHO	Monitoring and evaluation and information management

Recommendations and steps forward

- The visa process represented a big challenge for non-European deployees. The UN HR and Administration departments should invest more resources in supporting the visa process and the SBP partners should try to ensure deployments of at least six months to facilitate visa issuance by the Government. The provision of UNLPs and/or UN Certificates should also be advocated to legitimize the SBP deployee presence on the ground.

- Introductory packages and a checklist on the UN Agency internal procedures and working tools to be provided ahead of time to ensure the deployees performance can be more effective and efficient.

- To reduce profile mismatches the UN country offices should be more involved in the selection phase. Direct calls between the supervisors and deployees can be conducted if needed, and reference checks were mentioned as the best way forward. Finally, a direct contact between the UN Country offices and the SBP focal points may be conducted to fully explain the needs on the ground.

- Security briefings to be conducted for all SBP deployees in the first two weeks of the deployment and to be more practical (for example including information on bunker locations and evacuation plan). While these security briefings are normally conducted by UNDSS in most circumstances, where UNDSS is not present, individual UN Agencies should ensure that adequate security briefing and support is provided to deployees.

- High degree of flexibility should be demonstrated by the deployees to take on additional duties and responsibilities. At the same time, any change in the TORs should be promptly discussed and agreed by both the UN supervisor and the SBP deployee and communicated to the SBP sending partner as appropriate.

- The UN Agencies should invest more resources in ensuring long term sustainability for positions covered by SBP deployees, which could include coaching national colleagues and/or ensuring appropriate handover before departure.

- UN Agencies to inform deployees at least four weeks before the end of contract whether they will be seeking an extension or not.

- Longer deployments (at least six months) are highly recommended by both UN Agencies and SBP deployees.

- SBP Partners and UN Agencies to make sure the deployees have access to thematic and technical trainings related to their profiles.

- The different contract modalities within SBP partners are concerning for the deployees. A standardization of terms and benefits was strongly recommended by the SBP deployees, while this is not possible due to differing national minimum standards in relation to contracts, SBP partners are recommended to review their packages in line with the current market.

7. Acknowledgements

First and foremost, thanks to all our colleagues who supported the 2022 SBP joint monitoring mission preparation and implementation.

Particular thanks to the joint monitoring mission task force, composed by representatives from **OCHA**, **UNHCR**, **FCDO**, **NORCAP**, **WHO**, **DRC** and **MSB**, for their key role in the planning and implementation phase; **iMMAP**, **OCHA** and **UNHCR** for supporting the field missions in Ukraine, Poland and Moldova in terms of logistics and security, as well as the **SBP Steering Committee** for their ongoing support and guidance and to **Help.NGO** for their work on the report design.

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Finally a sincere thanks goes also to **Chiara Mancuso (SBP MEAL Coordinator)**, for leading on this mission from the start of her contract in July 2022, including the development of the monitoring mission strategy, organisation of field missions and the drafting of this report with the active support of the SBP Steering Committee, SBP Secretariat, and the joint monitoring mission task force.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to improve the SBP Network.

Standby Partnership Network delegation in Moldova

Annexes

Terms of reference

1. Humanitarian Context

Ukraine has seen intense fighting since 24 February 2022 following attacks from the Russian Federation. This has led to a humanitarian crisis, with millions of people requiring immediate humanitarian aid and protection, in Ukraine and in surrounding countries. In addition to devastation caused by conflict in Ukraine, surrounding countries of Poland, Moldova, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic are faced with high numbers of refugees seeking safety.

Due to the ongoing conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine over the last eight years, some United Nations and partners have already been in place assisting vulnerable communities, whilst other UN Agencies and humanitarian partners have faced the challenge of responding to a new emergency in a new country. Similar challenges have been faced by partners setting up new operations in the affected neighboring countries in and outside of the EU. Since 24 February, the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund has allocated US$91 million to 55 humanitarian projects, targeting 4.9 million people. As of 13 July, the UN and partners have reached 10.3 million people across Ukraine (OCHA, 21 July 2022). According to UNHCR, as of 12 July, there 9.2 million refugees have fled Ukraine, whilst IOM is reporting 6.3 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) inside Ukraine (OCHA, 21 July 2022).

2. The Standby Partnership (SBP)

The SBP is a network of bilateral agreements between organisations and United Nations (UN) Agencies. The partnership emerged in response to the increasing prevalence of global humanitarian crises which required the UN to rapidly expand its human resource capability at short notice. The SBP comprises a range of partners which provide support to the UN via the deployment of gratis personnel. Each Standby Partner maintains its own roster of humanitarian experts who are called upon to fill staffing needs in UN operations. The collaboration between UN Agencies and partners is an integral component of any rapid response mechanism.

3. SBP joint monitoring mission

Whilst not wholly standardised, Standby arrangements operate similarly across UN Agencies and Standby Partners and to a large extent the challenges, lessons learned and opportunities are therefore often the same.

The SBP has determined that, where the activities and objectives of SBP partners align for a particular humanitarian response, joint field monitoring missions may add value to both individual Agencies and the broader partnership. Perhaps most critically, joint missions minimise the burden on country offices of hosting and/or supporting concurrent missions by SBPs.

Following the initial humanitarian response to Ukraine and surrounding countries, a range of Standby Partners have agreed to pilot a joint monitoring mission focused the Ukraine Crisis, including Ukraine and other countries in the region. Individual Agencies may conduct separate monitoring as well, and may share results and findings as relevant with the SBP Network.

The SBP pilot 'After Action Review (AAR) Mission' to Mozambique was the first joint evaluation mission of its kind, and while the AAR focused on one country, this proposed joint monitoring mission aims to evaluate the SBP response to the Ukraine Crisis at an early stage during the response.

Following an initial meeting with SBP partners in May 2022, a core group was established in June to lead on the development for a Terms of Reference (TOR) and the organisation of a joint monitoring mission. The core group currently comprises representatives from OCHA, UNHCR, UK FCDO, MSB, and the SBP Secretariat. The key objectives of this Joint SBP Monitoring Mission are outlined below.

4. Participating Agencies

Core Group: UK FCDO, OCHA, UNHCR, MSB OCHA and UNHCR will support this mission by providing in-country logistical assistance and access to key personnel in Ukraine and any surrounding countries.

Organisations that are not participating in the field component will be requested to facilitate support via their country offices for this mission, where relevant. The team intends to minimise disruption to country offices and their ongoing operations. With this in mind, an initial remote desk review and data gathering exercise will be conducted across all affected countries, while an in-country mission will only be conducted in those countries with the majority of SBP deployments, currently Ukraine, Poland, and Moldova.

5. Joint monitoring mission objectives

The overarching objective of this monitoring mission is to monitor SBP contributions to UN operations that are responding to the Ukraine Crisis in Ukraine, and surrounding countries.

The monitoring mission broadly seeks to identify the extent to which (i) the SBP has enhanced the capacity of UN operations in the field and (ii) to determine how the response mechanism could be improved at this early stage (iii) to assess if the deployees matched with the UN operations expectations.

The monitoring mission has three key areas of focus:

Part A: Impact and performance
Part B: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations
Part C: Operational aspects and challenges

6. Approach and methodology

The monitoring mission methodology will rely on a variety of data collection tools and several sources of data mixed-method approach) in order to capture the different aspects in play in relation to the SBP deployments and will respond to the three key focus areas mentioned above. The mixed-method approach provides a broader spectrum of ways to better understand complex contexts, to reach a high number of respondents, and to address complementary questions that was not possible to investigate using one single methodology. In addition, to enhance the monitoring team understanding of the context and the dynamics, the analysis will be conducted remotely for all the steps that do not require physical presence on the ground (i.e. desk review, survey, some KIIs) and in-person for some of the Key Informative Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. The SBP MEAL Coordinator will be responsible to develop the complete and appropriate methodology and tools prior to the launch of the joint-monitoring mission.

The main data collection methods that will be included are highlighted below:

- **Desk review (remote):** including key documents and reports about the current context and other monitoring or evaluation reports that have been conducted and published. Review updated data on deployments up to 30 June 2022.

- **Quantitative Methods (remote):** This will rely on developing and launching two online surveys. One with the Agencies who have been supported through the SBP mechanism and the second survey with the deployees falling under the SBP mechanism. The survey will include around 15 close-ended questions. The quantitative survey will be vital to understand the perception of the SBP on the ground and the level of satisfaction.

- **Qualitative methods (remote and in-country):** including Key Informant Interviews with identified stakeholders such as senior UN staff, donors, operational management staff, and deployees falling under the SBP mechanism. The KII will supplement the survey and delve into more detail to aid analysis. The interviews will be conducted in a hybrid modality.

- **Qualitative methods (in-country):** including Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) with identified stakeholders such as senior UN staff, donors, operational management staff, and deployees falling under the SBP mechanism.

- **Consolidation of results** (report write up)

- **Meeting on general findings** (Power Point presentation).

7. Potential Questions

Part A: Impact and Performance

Key question: What is the SBP helping the UN to achieve in this context that would otherwise be difficult or more limited?

The following three sections have been adapted from the UNSBP PER template:

1. Impact: What critical gaps have been (or are being) addressed by the SBP? To what extent have SBP deployments to the Ukraine Crisis response strengthened UN operations? (E.g. through transfer of skills, new initiatives, innovation, set-up of new systems, coordination, etc).

2. Sustainability: How are host organisations ensuring that the deployees' contribution is sustained? (E.g. institutionalisation of new practices, handover, replacement).

3. Effect on the situation on the ground/persons of concern, if relevant: How have SBP deployments provided relief or assistance to affected populations?

Part B: Emerging needs for future support & recommendations

1. What are your key operational challenges and needs?
2. Do you have any plans to expand the locations of support?
3. Have you already launched internal recruitment processes for long-term positions?
4. How do you think the SBP can be utilised?
a. in the next six months?
b. Until these positions are filled?

Sub-questions for Part B:

1. Gender, Protection & Inclusion: At what stage of the response were specific positions in this skill profile filled? To what extent are UN Agencies finding it difficult to fill Gender/GBV/Inclusion roles? What evidence is there of SBP deployees mainstreaming gender, protection and inclusion through the operations?

2. Localisation: How cognisant are SBP deployees of the localisation agenda? Is this something that needs more emphasis and training? How have SBP deployees contributed to strengthening national and local leadership in humanitarian action? (E.g. by reinforcing local decision-making making, inclusion of local NGOs in coordination, increasing diversity of local actors, other?)

3. Accountability to Affected Populations / Communication with Communities: How are (or are) SBP deployees building capacity in these specific areas? How are they contributing to accountability to affected populations in the overall response?

Part C: Operational Aspects and Challenges

1. Did the UN Agency take any steps to fill the role internally (if any) or at the end of the SBP deployment?
a. Where any steps taken to fill the role with national staff? What were they?

2. If there was no UN presence in the country prior to February 2022, were SBP deployees amongst the first to deploy or were they mainly a second wave deployment following internal surge?
a. Were there any additional/unforeseen challenges relating to SBP deployments for Agencies that were not well established in the country?

3. To what extent has the SBP been able to deploy the right person? (incl. range of professional competencies: technical and interpersonal skills, communication, commitment, language?

4. To what extent has the SBP been able to deploy people quickly?
a. How timely has the SBP response been?
b. What have been the bottlenecks to getting people on the ground quickly?

8. Expected output

- Key findings and operational recommendations
- Guidance note for future SBP rapid joint monitoring missions, based on lessons learned from this mission
- Case study of overall response for promotion of the SBP

9. Target groups

- Senior UN, Donor, and Government staff; focusing on strategic priorities
- Operational UN Staff (Human Resource staff& Managers of SBP deployees), focusing on performance, impact, results, and challenges
- SBP Deployees, focusing on perception, results, and challenges

10. Geographic coverage

The monitoring mission is aiming to be multi-country, and the team will be focusing on Ukraine and surrounding countries where there are SBP deployments, currently Moldova, Poland Romania, and Slovakia.

11. Key documents

1. Ukraine Crisis Data Sheet
2. Inception Report, including Methodology & Results Matrix
3. List of interviewees & schedule of interviews/ FGDs
4. List of Ukraine Crisis deployees per SBP partner, UN Agency, profile and country/duty station

This table is closely related to the point **10. Geographic coverage**

Countries		Ukraine	Czech Republic	Hungary	Moldova	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Total
Request	**Filled**	45	2	3	12	13	5	3	83
	Pending	3			6	3	2		14
	Cancelled	10	2	6	2	2	1	3	26
	Total	58	4	9	20	18	8	6	123

Country region list

Country name	ISO 3166–1 alpha 3	Region	Country name	ISO 3166-1 alpha 3	Region
Kazakhstan	KAZ	Central Asia	Cayman Islands	CYM	Caribbean
Kyrgyzstan	KGZ	Central Asia	Cuba	CUB	Caribbean
Tajikistan	TJK	Central Asia	Curaçao	CUW	Caribbean
Turkmenistan	TKM	Central Asia	Dominica	DMA	Caribbean
Uzbekistan	UZB	Central Asia	Dominican Republic	DOM	Caribbean
China	CHN	Eastern Asia	Grenada	GRD	Caribbean
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	PRK	Eastern Asia	Guadeloupe	GLP	Caribbean
Hong Kong	HKG	Eastern Asia	Haiti	HTI	Caribbean
Japan	JPN	Eastern Asia	Jamaica	JAM	Caribbean
Macao	MAC	Eastern Asia	Martinique	MTQ	Caribbean
Mongolia	MNG	Eastern Asia	Montserrat	MSR	Caribbean
Republic of Korea	KOR	Eastern Asia	Puerto Rico	PRI	Caribbean
Taiwan	TWN	Eastern Asia	Saint Barthélemy	BLM	Caribbean
Belarus	BLR	Eastern Europe	Saint Kitts and Nevis	KNA	Caribbean
Bulgaria	BGR	Eastern Europe	Saint Lucia	LCA	Caribbean
Czechia	CZE	Eastern Europe	Saint Martin (French part)	MAF	Caribbean
Hungary	HUN	Eastern Europe	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	VCT	Caribbean
Moldova, Republic of	MDA	Eastern Europe	Sint Maarten (Dutch part)	SXM	Caribbean
Poland	POL	Eastern Europe	Trinidad and Tobago	TTO	Caribbean
Romania	ROU	Eastern Europe	Turks and Caicos Islands	TCA	Caribbean
Russian Federation	RUS	Eastern Europe	Virgin Islands (British)	VGB	Caribbean
Slovakia	SVK	Eastern Europe	Virgin Islands (U.S.)	VIR	Caribbean
Ukraine	UKR	Eastern Europe	Belize	BLZ	Central America
Anguilla	AIA	Caribbean	Costa Rica	CRI	Central America
Antigua and Barbuda	ATG	Caribbean	El Salvador	SLV	Central America
Aruba	ABW	Caribbean	Guatemala	GTM	Central America
Bahamas	BHS	Caribbean	Honduras	HND	Central America
Barbados	BRB	Caribbean	Mexico	MEX	Central America
Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba	BES	Caribbean	Nicaragua	NIC	Central America

Country name	ISO 3166-1 alpha 3	Region	Country name	ISO 3166-1 alpha 3	Region
Panama	PAN	Central America	United States of America	USA	Northern America
Argentina	ARG	South America	Åland Islands	ALA	Northern Europe
Bolivia	BOL	South America	Denmark	DNK	Northern Europe
Bouvet Island	BVT	South America	Estonia	EST	Northern Europe
Brazil	BRA	South America	Faroe Islands	FRO	Northern Europe
Chile	CHL	South America	Finland	FIN	Northern Europe
Colombia	COL	South America	Guernsey	GGY	Northern Europe
Ecuador	ECU	South America	Iceland	ISL	Northern Europe
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	FLK	South America	Ireland	IRL	Northern Europe
French Guiana	GUF	South America	Isle of Man	IMN	Northern Europe
Guyana	GUY	South America	Jersey	JEY	Northern Europe
Paraguay	PRY	South America	Latvia	LVA	Northern Europe
Peru	PER	South America	Lithuania	LTU	Northern Europe
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands	SGS	South America	Norway	NOR	Northern Europe
Suriname	SUR	South America	Svalbard and Jan Mayen	SJM	Northern Europe
Uruguay	URY	South America	Sweden	SWE	Northern Europe
Venezuela	VEN	South America	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	GBR	Northern Europe
Algeria	DZA	Northern Africa	Australia	AUS	Australia and New Zealand
Egypt	EGY	Northern Africa	Christmas Island	CXR	Australia and New Zealand
Libya	LBY	Northern Africa	Cocos (Keeling) Islands	CCK	Australia and New Zealand
Morocco	MAR	Northern Africa	Heard Island and McDonald Islands	HMD	Australia and New Zealand
Sudan	SDN	Northern Africa	New Zealand	NZL	Australia and New Zealand
Tunisia	TUN	Northern Africa	Norfolk Island	NFK	Australia and New Zealand
Western Sahara	ESH	Northern Africa	Fiji	FJI	Melanesia
Bermuda	BMU	Northern America			
Canada	CAN	Northern America			
Greenland	GRL	Northern America			
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	SPM	Northern America			

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