



**REPORT:
AID FOR CIVILIANS AND SOLDIERS
IN THE ATO ZONE**



This report outlines the problems that have been observed in the ATO zone (Anti-Terrorist Operation in the eastern regions of Ukraine) during the provision of humanitarian aid to civilians and soldiers, and presents possible means of more effective action in this regard

The Open Dialog Foundation was established in Poland, in 2009, on the initiative of Lyudmyla Kozlovska (who is currently the President of the Foundation). The statutory objectives of the Foundation include protection of human rights, democracy and rule of law in the post-Soviet area. Particular attention of the Foundation is focused on the region's largest countries: Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine.

The Foundation pursues its goals through the organisation of observation missions, including election observation and monitoring of the human rights situation in the post-Soviet area. Based on these activities, the Foundation creates its reports and distributes them among the institutions of the EU, the OSCE and other international organisations, foreign ministries and parliaments of EU countries, analytical centres and media.

In addition to observational and analytical activities, the Foundation is actively engaged in cooperation with members of parliaments involved in foreign affairs, human rights and relationships with the post-Soviet countries, in order to support the process of democratisation and liberalisation of their internal policies. Significant areas of the Foundation's activities also include support programmes for political prisoners and refugees.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The anti-terrorist operation zone (ATO) can practically be divided into two zones: the zone of active hostilities, and the zone of 'villages near-the-frontline' where Ukrainian troops are stationed, but where no direct hostilities are taking place. The situations as regards supply in the first and second zones differ, as different needs and different opportunities for delivering aid exist.

In the vicinity of the front line, the situation is more complex. Depending on the intensity of shelling, getting to certain locations can be difficult, and hence, there are problems with the supply of goods. This applies to both soldiers and civilians. The soldiers, however, are more mobile, and currently, every unit has 'their' volunteers, which means that during periods when the intensity of shelling is reduced, soldiers can count on supplies.

Civilians who have not decided to leave and still reside in the territories being shelled by the so-called 'separatists' can use the stock that they have accumulated in their homes. Also, using the experience acquired with regards to the frequency and timing of shelling, they sometimes go to the few shops which remain open where prices are currently 1.5-3 times higher than usual. Medicines and other necessities which cannot be bought are usually offered by soldiers or volunteers who bring aid should civilians address them for help.

Most of the humanitarian aid and assistance for soldiers gets to the "near-the-frontline' area from the rear. That is where military bases and warehouses which store goods imported by volunteers are located. Villages in the ATO zone behind the front line are also the places where, predominantly, the so-called 'displaced people' appear. Here, they are usually accepted by the local community and either rent apartments (or settle in apartments, made available to them free-of-charge) or venture further towards the centre of Ukraine. Usually, that's where they can access necessities (basic items, food, medicines).

Another problem is delivering humanitarian aid to the territories occupied by pro-Russian forces, the so-called Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. Since the beginning of the military operation, this task has been dangerous for Ukrainian volunteers due to the risk of kidnapping or being shot. For this reason, most of the volunteers avoided exiting the zone controlled by the Ukrainian army. More frequently, it was done by religious organisations, which had a greater chance of convincing militants of their neutrality in the conflict. For example, the 'Tvoja Peremoha' organisation, associated with the Protestant community from Slavyansk, delivered bread to small, poorly-stocked villages on the pro-Russian side in the autumn of 2014. However, the main way to get humanitarian aid to the population remaining outside the occupied area was by travelling to the appropriate (Ukrainian) side of the frontline.

Since 21 February, 2015, this possibility has been limited by the obligation to have a pass, issued by the Ukrainian side only in justified cases. This means that any person wishing to cross the 'border' must submit a relevant application, including personal data, and their reason for wishing to exit the territory of the so-called Donetsk/Lugansk People's Republic. The same applies to people who want to leave the territory occupied by the pro-Russian armed forces - they must report to the post occupied by the Ukrainian forces in order to file their application, which is then processed by the local police. [\[1\]](#)

This approach has further limited the possibility to travel between the area controlled by the Ukrainian forces and the territory occupied by the so-called 'separatists'. The obligation to have a pass has limited mobility between the zones for both civilians and volunteers, thus limiting the possibility of potential delivery of humanitarian aid to the region. Therefore, at present, the humanitarian aid from civil organisations and volunteers, operating in Ukraine, reaches primarily to residents living on the Ukrainian side of the frontline. There is no way to provide humanitarian aid which would guarantee the full security of volunteers in the territory controlled by pro-Russian militants. Consequently, humanitarian aid, in the main part, reaches the areas in the ATO zone under the control of the Ukrainian forces.

At the same time, Ukrainian legislation seeks to ensure the safety of volunteers, who render support to civilians and soldiers in the ATO zone. On 1 April, 2015, the Law on Volunteering was amended, and now it officially defines two new areas of voluntary activities related to emergencies, such as states of war, anti-terrorist operations or social conflicts: aid for refugees and internally displaced persons as well as assistance to Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations (including volunteer battalions). According to the provisions of the Law, volunteers have the right to provide assistance in the area of military operations on behalf of the organisation that they represent. In case of a volunteer's death or disability due to injuries sustained while carrying out activities in the conflict zone, appropriate compensation is provided for (a detailed analysis of the content of the amendment is attached to this report).

2. PROBLEMS WITH BREAKING THROUGH TO THE FRONT LINES WITH AID: RESTRICTIONS WITHIN ARMY STRUCTURES

Soldiers on the front line as well as volunteers who help them, often express the opinion that "if something arrives at the headquarters, it usually stays there". [2] The best items (according to them) are usually taken by those who are at the rear while only unwanted remaining items reach the front line. Moreover, practice has shown that items of aid are not delivered to the front lines from the headquarters in an organised manner - soldiers can get a new jacket or other things only when they leave the so-called 'forefront' and go to the rear and personally appear in the warehouse. Items are taken directly to the soldiers at the frontline only by volunteers; the more experienced volunteers try to act by bypassing the headquarters.

This method of delivering assistance, however, was recently restricted by the directive issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on 24 June, 2015. [3] Access to the positions on the front lines for both volunteers and non-accredited journalists, became restricted. This has been justified by safety reasons. However, in practice, this may mean that aid which has, thus far, reached soldiers directly, will be received at the rear (for example, the A sector which covers the city of Svatove). Volunteers have already begun to express their dissatisfaction with this decision and questioned the motivation behind it. [4]

The fact that volunteers frequently operate outside of official channels (they deliver clothing and equipment directly to soldiers), they also justify by the restrictions that relevant provisions of the law impose on the army. According to the regulation issued by the Ministry of Defence, [5] soldiers carrying out duties in the ATO zone are entitled to one complete uniform. This has been confirmed by a representative of the staff of the 'Aidar' battalion who stated that officially, everyone has one complete uniform and if it's damaged or gets dirty, a soldier has no other clothes to put on. [6] Aliona Chorna, a volunteer responsible for the distribution of uniforms, provided officially by Canada to the Ukrainian army, quotes an officer of one of the brigades: "as soldiers already had one issued uniform at that point, official acceptance of the uniforms would have brought about their transportation to the warehouse".

According to the relevant provisions, [7] in cases where a uniform is damaged in the course of duty including performing combat tasks in the ATO zone, the Ministry of Defence is required to issue a new uniform. However, a correspondent of the Open Dialog Foundation (ODF) has not confirmed the enforcement of this right in practice - soldiers are sceptical about the possibility of applying for a new uniform. According to officers, it would be months before such an application is granted, and the only opportunity to obtain necessary items, without unnecessary and lengthy paperwork, is by requesting the help of volunteers.

The same situation arose when it came to the supply of spare parts to the repair bases of the Armed Forces, located in the ATO zone. According to a commander of one of them, which services the 80 Mechanised Brigade vehicles, orders sent to the competent structures in the army are fulfilled to an

extent no greater than 15 percent. The interlocutor told the ODF correspondent that frequently, they don't receive the parts they request, but – as he said – they get what the army has in stock. This is why mechanics and drivers of vehicles themselves purchase necessary parts with their own money or ask volunteers for help. [8]

3. SUSPICIONS OF CORRUPTION

The issue of providing aid to soldiers also raises other kinds of doubts related to the distribution of obtained uniforms and equipment. More and more frequently opinions are voiced that both within the army structures and in volunteer battalions mechanisms are in place that allow persons to make money on supplies allotted to them by the state and material aid, delivered by voluntary groups. [9] It is difficult to prove whether such assertions are true, but the fact that so many individual cases have been cited suggests that such activities are undertaken by some, at least.

A case in point is the 'assistance from Canada' – approx. 30,000 uniforms and 7,000 pairs of military boots, officially transferred by the Canadians to Ukraine. According to Bohdan Kovalev who coordinates the cooperation in this field at the Ministry of Defence, the main role of volunteers is to control the system in accordance with which uniforms are issued, in order to avoid irregularities. Kovalev believes that the problem is not with the system itself, but with the human factor - for example, officers and private soldiers who have a desire to get rich. That is why it is volunteers who segregate, count and catalogue every item of clothing, receive applications from units, issue appropriate numbers of uniforms to individual branches. The ODF correspondent was present during their work in Odessa and was able to observe that the commanders of units were unhappy, to say the least, with the presence of volunteers – activists themselves believe that this is because they hinder the conduct of their 'business'.

A. Chorna recalls the case of an officer of one of the army units who asked for 300 uniforms from Canada for his brigade, but when it was explained to him that he must submit a list of clothing sizes for his soldiers, and then present photos of the latter in the new uniforms for confirmation, he withdrew his request and, as reported by the volunteers, 'disappeared'. A situation which raises doubts was also described by volunteers from Starobelsk. One of the soldiers requested the purchase of an expensive optical instrument. It transpired that at that time, his service in the ATO zone had come to an end and so he requested that the equipment be sent to him to Kiev. When volunteers offered to transfer it into the hands of the soldiers, appointed by him, who were in need of the instrument in the ATO zone, he insisted that it be sent to Kiev, and after the volunteers refused to transfer the instrument into the hands of a person who is not present at the frontline and requested again that he nominated recipients who serve in the ATO zone, he ceased communication with them. [10]

The ODF correspondent was told in the 'Aidar' battalion that the Ministry of Defence had transferred 800 uniforms to the battalion. [11] During the two-week stay in the battalion, A. Górska saw the 'state' uniform only once, and at the time it was being worn by her interlocutor who served as a logistician. None of the soldiers with whom she spoke had ever even heard about the possibility of acquiring uniforms from the Ministry of Defence; they were all dressed in uniforms from donors or had bought their own. According to the headquarters, all 800 sets were distributed to the soldiers of the battalion. [12]

The same applies to bulletproof vests and protective helmets, which, according to the Ministry of Defence, should be issued to all soldiers called to arms within the next wave of mobilisation. According to the Ministry of Defence, [13] each of the soldiers should receive basic equipment; still, frequent requests for this kind of support, addressed to the Open Dialog Foundation and other organisations helping soldiers, coming from the recruits and their families, contradict the official declarations. Separate cases, gathered by the Open Dialog Foundation, prove that many soldiers are going to the front line without proper equipment. The answer to the question as to what has caused this situation is

currently the object of our interest. The results of the Foundation's activities in this area will be published in a separate report.

The cited cases can prove the veracity of the belief, formulated in private conversations, about 'business' conducted by some of the soldiers/officers in some volunteer battalions and divisions of the army (these opinions are repeated, for example, in relation to the 'Aidar' battalion and the now defunct 'Shakhtyorsk' battalion). It is difficult to prove that such practices take place, but the fact is, that in the vicinity of the town of Shchastya, many civilians wear military jackets; it is also common knowledge that such clothing can be bought at the marketplace.

According to volunteers, working every day in the ATO zone, [14] there are divisions and battalions which limit their list of needs to a minimum. On the other hand, there are those which 'need everything' - in relation to the latter, there is a suspicion that the surplus is sold on the 'black market'.

The same situation applies to aid for displaced persons. In the city of Svatove, the city Mayor Yevgen Rybalko stated in an official conversation that "when five quilts for refugees arrive, three of them are delivered to the needy, and two are taken to the local marketplace". According to him, 'volunteers' in the city are often those with a dubious reputation, who suddenly became committed to the refugee cause on a large scale. He also stated that such a mentality is typical for a large part of Ukrainians and that it will be very difficult to fight against it. [15]

4. POSSIBLE IRREGULARITIES AT UKRAINIAN POSTS IN THE ATO ZONE

Traffic control near the front line is carried out through checkpoints, which are in place every few dozen kilometres - closer to the occupied territories the number posts increases. Restrictions on movement in the ATO zone were initially aimed at strengthening security in the area. Increasingly, however, information is being spread by volunteers and civilians that irregularities occur at the checkpoints.

According to unofficial, yet regular reports, it transpires that bribes are being requested at the checkpoints. Restrictions on movement between the zones make it difficult for inhabitants of the occupied territories to leave, as they do not have immediate access to the offices which issue permits. The necessity to travel to the Ukrainian checkpoint in order to submit documents, and then return to obtain the completed document (which is not always ready on time), exposes civilians to unnecessary danger. Therefore, according to unofficial sources, fixed rates are chargeable at the 'border', settlement of which allows individuals to pass without having proper documentation. [16]

A similar problem exists with regards to the demanding bribes for movement within the ATO zone by police officers who are on duty there. A recent example of such regards artists returning from Slavyansk having performed at the cultural event 'Ukrainian Spring'. According to them, their car was stopped on the road between checkpoints and they were forced to pay UAH 2000 to pass. Presented with the fact that the passengers in the car were musicians and writers who are well-known in Ukraine and who had given a free-of-charge performance as part of the patriotic project in the ATO zone, did not serve to affect the behaviour of police officers. [17]

Similar reports, in the majority, relate to locations where policemen man the checkpoints, rather than volunteer battalions. This raises the suspicion that the problem is systemic, involving the use of previously existing corruption mechanisms in the new conditions. Certainly, this is not true of all the checkpoints; still, the number of similar reports raises concern.

The problem with demanding bribes relates primarily to civilians while it affects volunteers working in the ATO zone to a lesser extent. This may be also due to the fact that soldiers and policemen are direct recipients of the aid, delivered by volunteers. However, the recently introduced restrictions on the latter

may bring about the creation of another 'grey zone', similar to that functioning on the border of the occupied zone.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Laws often prevent the smooth and swift transfer of necessary items directly to those in need of them. Despite official assurances that the army is equipped with everything that is needed, numerous observations have shown that virtually no soldier has been fully equipped by the state. The state structures work very slowly and inefficiently. Evidence indicates that irregularities occur at all levels.

The volunteers themselves also do not have spotless reputations. Some of them (according to numerous declarations) may be participating in the trade of humanitarian aid. However, observations of the ODF correspondent may indicate that their number is smaller than believed. In many environments, there are various organisations or volunteer groups which accuse each other of 'stealing' and claim that "the aid passed to them does not reach the needy". This distrust means that there is a lack of cooperation between different volunteer groups.

An example of this might be an attempt to coordinate assistance between a volunteer, cooperating with soldiers of one of the battalions stationed in Starobilsk, and a volunteer from Shchastya (who regularly delivers aid to soldiers in Stanitsa Luganska). The first withdrew from cooperation, consisting of rendering help in the delivery of items, prepared by volunteers cooperating with soldiers of the 'Aidar' battalion in the town of Shchastya to Stanica, because "she does not trust them". Meanwhile, the volunteer, helping in Shchastya, stated that "if someone goes and carries only three stretchers, but refuses to take any other aid, they obviously have other aims than helping people". [18] In this way, antagonism developed between volunteers and productivity is reduced. In one case, two cars were driven to the same place, although – if the action had been coordinated – just one car would have been sufficient.

In light of the most frequently voiced doubts, mentioned above, when delivering aid to the ATO zone, one should consider the following recommendations:

1. Avoid passing aid through official channels, state structures and official structures of the army.
2. It is best to deliver aid with the help of local volunteers as they are well-acquainted with the situation at the local level, or volunteers from outside the region who know the local situation well.
3. It is important to work with volunteers and units which have proven to operate without irregularities; avoid cooperation with those where doubts appear (the Open Dialog Foundation has already gained experience in this field).
4. In every, even the most heavily criticised battalion/division, there is a large number of honest, patriotic soldiers who are poorly equipped due to the very fact that at the level of headquarters, irregularities occur. They should be helped, but only directly, using the rule of 'passing into the hands'.
5. Each new request for aid should be validated in person or by trusted people - whether this particular division/soldier really needs the help they have requested.
6. At the same time, irregularities witnessed by people delivering aid should be exposed and publicised, and all possible tools should be used in order to regulate the situation.

6. PROSPECTS

Interviews with soldiers and their families, as well as volunteers from the ATO zone, helped to highlight another area where help is needed more and more. It transpired that soldiers' families who remain in their homes - both in the ATO zone and outside - are often in very difficult situations. Some of these families lived meagrely even before the start of the war, and the departure of a husband/father/son to the front line has further deteriorated their financial situation. But the problem also applies to many soldiers whose families were previously financially stable.

Soldiers occupy the ATO zone on the basis of one of two procedures: they are subject to mobilisation or they sign a contract when joining the army (or special police battalion). However, many volunteers, especially in the first phase of the ATO, went to the east of Ukraine without relevant documents. Over the following months, some of them signed contracts with the army (in the case of battalions of the Armed Forces) or started working in the police ranks (special police battalions) and began to receive salaries.

However, not all soldiers can pass the appropriate procedures, for example, due to a criminal record or because they exceed the age limit. Some say outright that "they did not come here for the money", and they want to fight, and not to earn money. [19] Their families mostly accept this choice, but - after a year of conflict - this often causes a necessity to live on the verge of poverty (especially for those families in which the man was the sole breadwinner). The same applies to the soldiers who have submitted the relevant documents. Often, the process takes so long that they wait a few months for the first salary that they can send home. If a soldier is wounded or killed during this time, it makes the process of providing compensation and covering the costs of medical treatment difficult.

Some organisations in Ukraine began to deal with controlling the process of obtaining official status by soldiers, and revealing procrastinations and irregularities in this connection; they also assist soldiers in obtaining appropriate statuses and - hence - obtaining due financial compensation. The Open Dialog Foundation has also begun to provide assistance in this regard, as it has prepared a booklet informing soldiers about the procedures for obtaining the status of an 'ATO participant' and on their entitlement rights in this respect.

However, this top-down process should be accompanied by bottom-up activity, which consists of providing emergency assistance to the families who need help now. At this time, the families of soldiers (both those killed and those who cannot support their families for other reasons) remain largely under the care of volunteers who have direct access to information about them due to personal contact with them and their families. But it seems that - with the prolonged conflict and the deteriorating economic situation in Ukraine - the number of families in need of material support will grow.

For now, soldiers' families which are in a difficult situation do not receive aid, which is, however, given willingly to refugees. Men who fight on the front line are often too proud to admit that the situation at home is hard. Therefore, we believe that it is worth becoming involved in this type of aid more systematically.

ATTACHMENT 1. AMENDMENT OF THE LAW ON VOLUNTEERING

On 5 March, 2015, the Law of Ukraine 'On amending some laws of Ukraine regarding volunteer activities' (hereinafter – the Law) was enacted. In this Law, the interests of voluntary organisations involving volunteers in their activities have been agreed and included. The Law brought the standards of Ukrainian legislation for volunteering closer to the highest international standards. The Law entered into force on 1 April, 2015.

Thus, the new Law of Ukraine 'On amending some laws of Ukraine regarding volunteer activities' **removes restrictions** regarding the conduct of voluntary activities by organisations and institutions which means that now, civil society organisations **will not be obliged to register with the Ministry of Social Policy** (hereinafter - the MSP or the Ministry) in order to obtain the status of 'voluntary organisation'. Only in cases where the organisation engages, as volunteers, foreigners and stateless persons, is it necessary for information about such an organisation to be placed on the official website of the Ministry of Social Policy.

The new law states that the Ministry is obliged to publish on its website, public information about organisations and institutions which engage volunteers in their activities, including information about organisations and institutions which **engage foreigners** and stateless persons in order to carry out voluntary activities in Ukraine, within three working days of receipt of such information.

Organisations and institutions which engage in voluntary work, foreigners and stateless persons, are now **required to inform the MPS of the fact in writing within five working days from the commencement of such involvement**. In the event of termination of voluntary activity, such persons must also, within five working days, notify the Ministry.

Therefore, the new Law serves to amend the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, which provides for the procedure for **obtaining a residence permit**.

Previously, in order to obtain a residence permit, an alien or a stateless person had to submit **an application issued by the organisation engaging the volunteer**, whereas now, such an organisation is not obliged to have the status of 'volunteer organisation', and the provisions of the law stipulate that information regarding this should be published on the website of the Ministry (in accordance with the procedure described above).

In order to enter information about an organisation which engages volunteers, one needs to send an official letter to the Ministry which includes:

- concise information on the organisation and direction of its activities;
- the address of the organisation's seat;
- the EGRPOU Code (*Uniform State Register of Enterprises and Organisations of Ukraine*);
- electronic and telephone contact details;
- first name and surname of the volunteer;
- the period for which the volunteer is being engaged.

Upon receipt of an official letter, the Ministry, **within three days**, is required to publish information about this organisation (excluding the volunteer's personal data) on its website. The Migration Service can obtain information directly from this website.

In order to speed up the handling of a request submitted by the organisation, an exchange of electronic correspondence takes place; a scanned letter is sent via e-mail and a hard copy is sent by post.

The address to which the letter should be sent:

stefanova@mlsp.gov.ua

Elena Vladimirovna Stefanova (Volunteer Work Department of the Authority for Elderly People and the Rendering of Social Services)

The new law **also lowers the minimum age for volunteers**. Now, a volunteer must be at least 14 years old, but must have consent from parents (adoptive parents), foster parents or a legal guardian. People aged between 14 and 18 cannot render voluntary assistance during the liquidation of consequences of natural and technological disasters; provide assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine or other military units, law enforcement authorities, public authorities during a state of high alert, a state of emergency or martial law; or in hospitals.

In addition, the new law eliminates the obligation to insure volunteers – now, this responsibility lies with the organisation. Moreover, **what were previously legal requirements** – conclusion of an agreement with the volunteer, issuance of a volunteer ID card and covering expenses - **have become the responsibilities** of the organisation.

The law identifies two types of agreements which can be concluded: an agreement on conducting voluntary activities (with volunteers) and an agreement on the provision of voluntary assistance (concluded with beneficiaries of aid, it is mandatory on the request of the beneficiary).

An agreement on conducting voluntary activities is concluded obligatorily in cases of providing voluntary assistance in organising events of national and international significance, ie. mass sports events, entertainment and cultural events and other spectator and social events, as well as in cases of providing voluntary assistance aimed at eliminating the impact of natural or technological disasters. The agreement shall be concluded in the manner specified by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, as well as on the request of a volunteer or his legal representative, if the volunteer is a person between the ages of 14 and 18 (with the written consent of the parents (adoptive parents), foster parents, or a legal guardian).

Due to the fact that many Ukrainian volunteers are currently working **in the ATO zone** and providing help, risking their own lives and health, the new law has introduced two new directions of volunteer work. Currently, voluntary activities can be performed in the following areas:

"rendering assistance to citizens affected by a disaster of a natural or technical nature, during a state of high alert, state of emergency or martial law, the anti-terrorist operations, as a result of social conflicts, events, as well as to the victims of crime, refugees, internally displaced persons";

"rendering voluntary assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, other military units, law enforcement authorities, public authorities during a state of high alert, state of emergency or martial law, the anti-terrorist operation".

It is worth noting that in certain areas, a volunteer **has no right to render assistance independently**, but only on behalf of an organisation or institution. In all other cases, the volunteer can operate independently, without being associated with officially registered organisations, provided that he notifies the beneficiaries of the aid of this fact.

At the same time, formal relations with an organisation which engages volunteers for its activities, gives the right **to receive a credit for volunteer work in a work placement**, in cases where the student is rendering assistance in spheres corresponding to nature of their regular studies, with the consent of the university.

The law defines the state guarantees regarding **the payment of a one-off grant in the event of death or disability** of a volunteer due to injuries (contusions, traumas or serious mutilations, sustained in the course of rendering volunteer assistance in the area in which anti-terrorist operations and armed conflicts are being carried out. The law specifies the amounts of such compensation:

In case of death – 500-fold minimum subsistence level, established by law for persons without disabilities; in the case of granting category I compensation for disability – 250-fold minimum subsistence level; in the case of granting category II disability compensation - 200-fold minimum subsistence level; in the case of granting category III disability compensation - 150-fold minimum subsistence level.

The one-off grant is paid based on a decision, issued by an authority designated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The competent authority shall make a decision on the basis of:

- an application submitted to the body by beneficiaries of the aid;
- forensic medical opinion confirming the causes of death or a certificate of injuries sustained in the area of an anti-terrorist operation;
- written confirmation by the head of one of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, other military units, law enforcement bodies, public authorities, located directly in the area of anti-terrorist operations, military operations and armed conflicts (if necessary).

List of sources:

1. Facebook / ATO Press Centre - <https://www.facebook.com/ato.news/posts/931231516887655?fref=nf&pnref=story>.
2. Based on conversations with: Yuriy Borysenko – a volunteer delivering aid to some dozen units and divisions of volunteer battalions, located at the front lines of the ATO zone, and Olga (her surname is known to the reporter), a volunteer, in February 2015.
3. Kanapova Sotnia / The General Staff has forbidden volunteers from coming to the front, and the soldiers from posting on social networks - <http://divannaya-sotnya.com.ua/ATO/genshtab-zaboroniv-volonteram-prizhdzhati-na-peredovu-a-soldatam-pisati-v-socmerezah-foto.html#.VPDqBez0SXA.facebook>.
4. Facebook / Ksyusha Alexeeva - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100006863022270&ref=ts&fref=ts>.
5. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine - the official website / Ordinance dated 26 December, 2014 No. 298 - <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0050-15>.
6. In a conversation with A. Góralaska in February 2015.
7. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine - the official website / Ordinance dated 4 August, 2000, No 1225 - <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1225-2000-%D0%BF>.
8. A conversation which took place on 7 February, 2015 in the ATO zone.
9. The press of Ukraine / Yatsenyuk promises to cleanse the army of corruption - <http://uapress.info/uk/news/show/26957>.
10. The story was relayed by Yelena Cherevata, a volunteer from Starobelsk.
11. Based on a conversation with Yaroslav (our interlocutor refused to give his surname) carried out in February 2015.
12. This information was confirmed by the acting Staff spokesman nicknamed ‘The Greek’.
13. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine - the official website / Ordinance dated 26 December, 2014, No. 298 - <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0050-15>.
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18. The situation was observed by A. Góralaska in February 2015.
19. Conversations carried out with soldiers of the ‘Donbas’, ‘Azov’ and ‘Aidar’ battalions between April 2014 and February 2015.