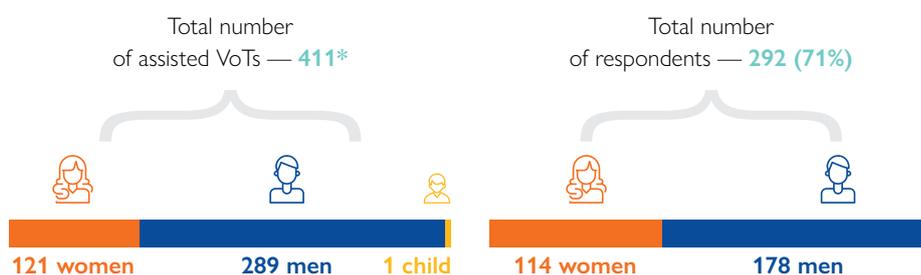


# UPDATES ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) SITUATION IN UKRAINE (30 JULY 2020)

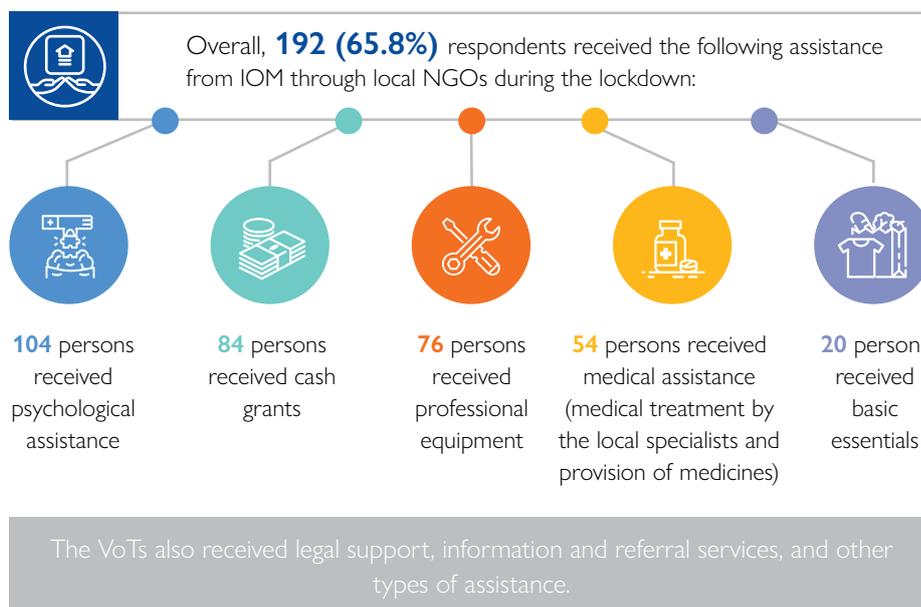
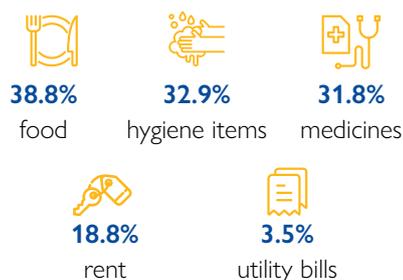
COVID-19: FLASH ASSESSMENT OF VOTs NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES, ROUND 2

In March 2020, the Government of Ukraine introduced restrictive measures due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the same month, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted the first round of the survey to evaluate the impact of the pandemic and restrictive measures on the needs of the victims of trafficking (VoTs). In June, IOM conducted the second round of the study. The NGOs interviewed the VoTs who were included in the reintegration programme and received assistance from March till May 2020. Overall, 20 NGOs – IOM local implementing partners in majority regions of Ukraine, excluding Kyiv, NGCA, and AR Crimea, provided data. With partial lifting of restrictions, the majority of organizations returned fully or partially to the usual work modality, with only 35% of them still maintaining the “work from home” modality. The NGOs continue to fulfil their everyday tasks — reporting, interviewing the beneficiaries, providing phone or online consultations to clients. Some NGO representatives (43%) stated their employees needed stress management counselling.

IOM continued provision of comprehensive reintegration assistance to VoTs with the capacities of partner NGOs to make sure that VoTs receive individualized and needs-based services. Apart from that, NGO specialists provided phone or online psychological counselling to mitigate COVID-19-related mental health consequences.



During the period of the restrictive measures, IOM provided cash grants as additional assistance to the most vulnerable VoTs who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Cash grants were mostly spent on:



When answering the question on how the IOM assistance affected situation during the lockdown, the majority of the respondents stated the assistance saved them from debts and helped to survive through the lockdown. As one respondent said, *“After I lost a job, I struggled to provide for my family, even buying food was a challenge at that time, so the cash grant was very timely.”*

Furthermore, every eighth beneficiary indicated that financial assistance helped them to prevent conflicts in the families, build psychological resilience, and restore confidence in the future. They also stated that the psychological counselling they received helped to resolve or prevent some mental health issues, such as depression, stress, and anxiety that were caused by the pandemic, as well

as by the inability to secure their income. *“One respondent mentioned: This assistance prevented domestic violence in my family.”* Some respondents were able to accumulate and redistribute their resources and savings to devote more time and energy to develop their business plans, find new spheres of employment and acquire new skills necessary for self-employment.

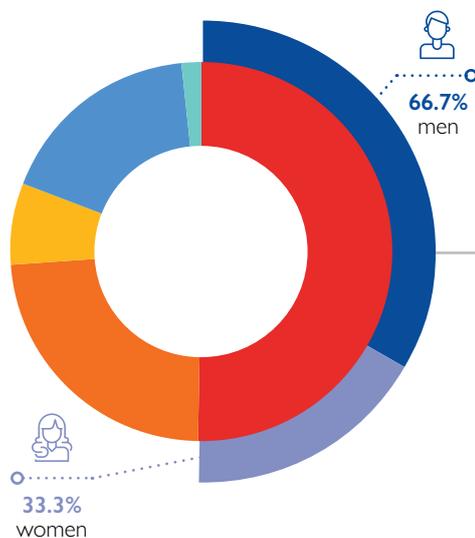
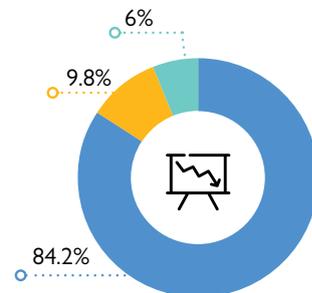
\* March–May 2020

At the same time, most of the VoTs stated that their financial situation deteriorated during the lockdown.

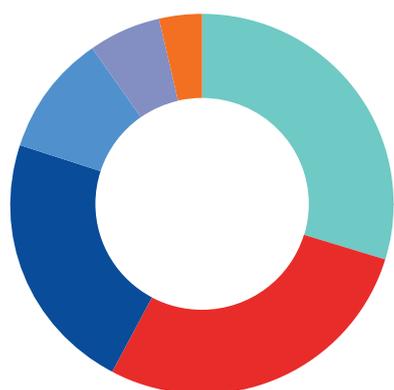
↓ worsened

□ remained unchanged

↑ improved



- 50.3%** of the respondents said they **had lost their jobs**, **66.7%** out of them there were men and **33.3%** women;
- 23.6%** of all respondents indicated that they **had fewer orders or did not have the new ones**;
- 7.2%** of the respondents stated they **were on special leave without pay** during the lockdown and had not returned to their work yet;
- 17.5%** of the respondents said they **continued to work despite the restrictive measures**, as the demand for agriculture and dairy products in some cases even increased;
- 1.4%** of the respondents said they **were either on maternity leave, studying or undergoing training**, and did not work.



- 29.8%** of the respondents indicated they **had already returned to their previous jobs**;
- 28.1%** of the respondents **still did not have jobs and planned to look for a job in their professional area**;
- 22.3%** of the respondents **expressed the wish to develop their existing businesses, start new enterprises, or become self-employed**;
- 10.2%** of the respondents **planned to look for a job in a new field**;
- 6.1%** of the respondents **were either on maternity leave or renewed their study**;
- 3.5%** of the respondents said they **would try to find a job abroad** once the restrictions were lifted.

## TYPES OF FURTHER NEEDED ASSISTANCE



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Employment and financial situation

Despite the assistance and support, the financial situation of most VoTs has deteriorated since the introduction of the quarantine. The only area that just moderately suffered from the restrictive measures was agriculture. In this area, people had the opportunity to adapt to the new working conditions and continued to work.

### 2. Needs assessment

The most pressing needs of the VoTs are food, hygiene, medical assistance and covering rent/utilities. Among other priority needs, there were vocational training, professional equipment, and small-business management training. The need for medical treatment (91 respondents) spiked compared to the first round of the survey (13).

### 3. Recommendations for further assistance

In the short time perspective the assistance should be focused on tackling the immediate consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and preserving victims' mental health. In the long run, assistance should be aimed at asserting victims' economic independence through training and income-generating activities.