Leveraging telemedicine to improve health equity in Ukraine during and after the war
Vitaly Karanda, Oleg Semeryk, Artem Liashenko, Svitlana Hlushchyk, Lauren Hartel, Yelyzaveta Noskova
Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS) Ukraine

Context
Over the past several years, the Government of Ukraine (GoU) has enacted reforms in the health sector to catalyze deep-well challenges such as corruption, improve access to care, and strengthen the crisis preparedness to deal with emerging health threats. As a result, the government is in the process of implementing a range of reforms to improve the health system. This includes the transformation of the National Health Insurance (NHI) system, the establishment of telemedicine in primary care, and the development of digital health solutions.

Telemedicine provides a unique and innovative resource to address these challenges. Thanks to access, telemedicine has been increasingly effective in reducing healthcare costs and improving health outcomes. Healthcare providers face increased demand in prolonged conflict situations, particularly in war zones. This has led to the need for telemedicine to provide timely care, reduce costs, and improve the quality of care.

Activity Description
LHSS is currently conducting an analysis of telemedicine costs and developing recommendations for the National Purchaser (NHSU) of health care services in Ukraine. The project is engaging stakeholders, conducting analyses, informing decision-makers, and fostering public-private partnerships to achieve contracting and purchasing arrangements for Program of Medical Devices, including absorptive capacity, absorptive learning, and absorptive innovation. LHSS is supporting the GoU in reaching underserved populations with essential health care services through telemedicine. Using a systems thinking approach, the project is engaging stakeholders, conducting analyses, informing decision-makers, and fostering public-private partnerships to achieve.

Activity Impact
LHSS’s systems thinking approach contributed to increased access to health services among underserved populations through the use of telemedicine.

Connecting populations to health services during the war
The streamlined telemedicine solutions selection and implementation process contributed to increased access to telemedicine services by people in all regions of Ukraine. Despite challenges such as the imposition of martial law and destruction of critical infrastructure, the GOU has been able to successfully leverage telemedicine solutions and equipment.

Evidence
Convincing populations to health services during the war
LHSS’s telemedicine, virtual operating rooms, and remote monitoring (e.g., fetal heart rates) supported the GoU in creating and standardizing the selection and supporting the GoU in reaching underserved populations with essential health care services through telemedicine. Using a systems thinking approach, the project is engaging stakeholders, conducting analyses, informing decision-makers, and fostering public-private partnerships to achieve contracting and purchasing arrangements for Program of Medical Devices, including absorptive capacity, absorptive learning, and absorptive innovation.

Facilitators
The proximity to Russia and its positive impact on the economy of Ukraine, particularly in the areas of trade and infrastructure development, has allowed for the rapid deployment of telemedicine solutions and equipment.

Challenges
The need to address Russian military aggression and the challenges posed by the war for sustained funding for various health care services, including telemedicine, has been a significant challenge. The GoU has sought to address these challenges by leveraging telemedicine solutions and equipment in war-torn areas to provide essential health care services.

Lessons Learned
By incorporating these lessons learned, future endeavors in telemedicine can more quickly and flexibly address emerging health challenges. The project successfully leveraged telemedicine solutions and equipment to connect populations to health services during the war.

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