# Força Ukraine Brief September, 2023

#### **Situation Overview**

- Significant gap in training remains for pre-hospital medical providers
  - No USG-support within Ukraine
    - Normally a Department of Defense Initiative
    - Outside of the scope of other USG Organizations/Departments
  - Pre-hospital providers (males) cannot leave Ukraine without special permissions
  - Currently no organic capability within Ukraine to teach advanced pre-hospital skills
  - Most training being provided by small groups of volunteers
    - Areas of focus near larger cities or hospital-based, not at or near front lines
- The Força Foundation (US-Based 501(c)3) partnered with the Ukrainian American Medical Support Initiative (UAMSI) to provide pre-hospital trauma training in areas of highest need/lowest density of training
  - Primary goal to ensure all have basic pre-hospital trauma training
  - Advanced intervention training for approved advanced providers, informed by changes to Ukrainian laws and reality of the situation on the ground:
    - Field whole blood transfusion
    - Chest decompression
    - Tourniquet conversion

# **Areas of Operation**

- Training provided in areas of maximal need and impact:
  - Eastern Ukraine near current front lines
    - Donetsk Region
    - Farthest east point any team had traveled to provide advanced pre-hospital trauma training (5 miles from active front)
  - Dnipro, a main hub in Eastern Ukraine
  - Kyiv
- · Red circles (map) show areas of training



# **Team Composition**

- Physician/Trainer: Steve Donnelly, MD (Emergency Medicine/Family Practice)
- Paramedics/Lead Trauma Trainers: Emily Mudick (Paramedic/Firefighter), Arthur Bruck-Fincher (Paramedic/Firefighter)
- Interpreters: Stan S., Viktoriia B., Bohdan F.
- Team Lead/Alternate Trainer: Mike Piet (Paramedic)
- All team members had previous experience in Ukraine



# **Budget and Spending**

- Total budget: \$36,162.57
  - Exclusively raised from individual donations, predominantly in \$50-100 range
    - 90 unique donors
    - Two angel donors covered additional costs
      - Travel, movement, food, lodging
      - Interpreter pay
- Total cost of mission: \$35,351.68
  - Medical Equipment: \$14,937.46
  - Donation to a local maternity hospital in Odessa: \$2,000
  - Interpreters: \$10,800.00
  - Meals and Incidentals: \$1,273.15
  - Transportation: \$2,899.87
  - Lodging: \$1677.39
  - Fuel: \$844.57
  - Vehicle Maintenance/Donation: \$875
- Focus on providing medical equipment from local vendors
- Based on findings, additional funding needed for long-term effort



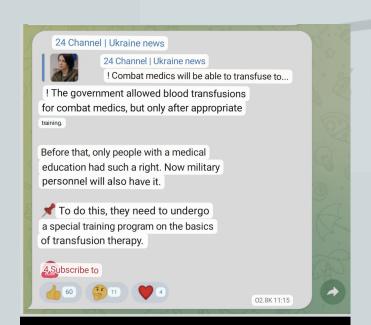
### **Impact**

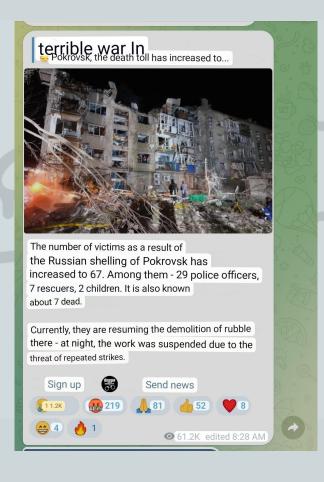
- 28 total days of training conducted by Advanced Level Providers (MD, Paramedics)
- 750 individuals trained
  - Cost per individual trained, \$44 (total participants/total mission cost)
  - Provided cutting edge training (field whole blood) not otherwise widely available
- \$20,000 medical/cold weather material donated
  - Most material was locally acquired
    - 250 locally made, high quality Dnipro Tourniquets
    - 100 decompression needles
    - 300 Israeli bandages
    - 250 packages of combat gauze
    - 150 chest seals
    - 1 Joint Operation Surgical Pack
    - 350 IV gauges
    - 150 Thermal blankets
    - 5 SAM IO drivers/31 SAM IO needles
    - 5 surgical cric kits



# **True Impact**

In Priyutny, a tank hit our trench, wounded my comrades, he was wounded in the thigh and legs, he screamed, when I applied the tourniquet, he said enough, I, as you taught, rolled the tourniquet 2 more times, as you taught, and then evacuated, as your guy with the tattoo taught hands... The guy is alive, I'm not lost, thank you





Good day. Bohdan, I want to thank You, Mike, Emily and Steve for the great courses in medicine. I personally have received a lot of useful knowledge which was already used by me yesterday.



We are 15 km from the border with Belarus already. Yesterday I put an IV bag on a guy from my platoon. Everything worked out great and I hit the vein with the first attempt.

P.S. The backpack is cool (very useful).

Thank you again

#### **Focus**

- Training reflected unique realities of the conflict in Ukraine
  - New guidance from the Government of Ukraine on Field Whole Blood Transfusions (left) and Tourniquet Conversion (right) due to prolonged field care
  - Força team among the first to provide trainings on these topics, to include in areas of active hostilities
- Secondary focus to provide as much medical equipment as possible
  - Individual First Aid Kits (IFAKs) continue to be poorly resourced, lacking key items
    - Standard issue (left), after Força restock (right)
  - Partnered with local vendors to purchase items made in Ukraine (Dnipro TQ, Paramedic UA)
    - Supported the local economy
    - Ensured maximal impact of donor dollars
    - Provided superior equipment available in Ukraine









# **Findings**

- Continued need for advanced level training for pre-hospital providers
  - Ukraine one of the most heavily mined countries in the world
    - Threats include mines, cluster munitions, unexploded ordnance, missiles
    - Current and future injuries in civilian populations will continue to be analogous to combat wounds, necessitating providers with advanced pre-hospital trauma training
- Advanced training almost exclusively conducted by small groups of volunteers
  - USG response limited by inability of DOD to be present in Ukraine
  - Pre-hospital training outside of the purview of most USG organizations
  - Absence of codified, large-scale training efforts in advanced pre-hospital trauma care and interventions
- Tactical Emergency Casualty Care or Tactical Combat Casualty Care as a model for pre-hospital care must be evolved to meet the reality of the situation on the ground in Ukraine
  - Applications for future US conflicts with near-peer/peer adversaries

## Way Ahead for 2024

- The Força Foundation remains committed to a recurring presence in Ukraine to ensure continued training opportunities for pre-hospital providers
  - Propose a recurring presence in Ukraine starting JAN 2024 for CY 2024
    - Two months on/one month off in quarterly iterations
    - Focus remains on pre-hospital trauma training with potential to add in MEDEVAC from the front lines
- Cost estimate for one year of training with a goal of 5,000 providers trained: \$325,000
  - Medical equipment: \$50,000
  - Travel: \$30,000
  - Interpreters: \$100,000
  - Trainers: \$100,000
  - Incidentals: \$10,000
  - Lodging: \$20,000
  - Ground transport/fuel: \$35,000



## References and Further Reading

- Combat Medics are Now Allowed to Perform Prehospital Blood Transfusion Ukrainian MoH. Gwara Media, JUN 2023:
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  - https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/02/world/europe/ukraine-war-casualties-wounded.html
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- NATO countries listen to the experience of our combat medics and therefore update their standards Tetyana Ostashchenko. Army Inform, AUG 2023:
  - https://armyinform.com.ua/2023/08/02/krayiny-nato-dosluhayutsya-do-dosvidu-nashyh-bojovyh-medykiv-i-tomu--onovlyuyut-svoyi-standarty-tetyana-ostashhenko/
- Low-quality tourniquets provided to the Ukrainian Armed Forces were never checked. Ukrainska Pravda, AUG 2023:
  - https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/28/7417408/

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