

## **Report on the Ukrainian Association for Cognitive and Behavioral Therapy (UACBT) Project for EABCT**

Throughout 2024, the Ukrainian Association for Cognitive and Behavioral Therapy (UACBT), with financial support from EABCT and the Swiss Association for CBT (SGVT SSTCC), and in partnership with the Ukrainian Institute for CBT, implemented a significant humanitarian educational project. The initiative focused on training military psychologists in low-intensity CBT interventions to enhance the prevention of mental disorders and strengthen the resilience of Ukrainian service members.

The need for such an initiative has been critical since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and remains highly relevant today. Civilian psychologists who joined the armed forces at the outbreak of the war lacked combat experience, making their skills inadequate for military conditions. On the other hand, military psychologists, who had always served in the army, had neither the time nor the resources to master modern, evidence-based psychological intervention methods. It was only the harsh realities of full-scale war and active combat that underscored the urgent necessity for such training. As a result, the UACBT project was launched at a crucial moment—once applications opened, we received over 300 submissions.

Following a thorough selection process, 50 psychologists from the Armed Forces of Ukraine were enrolled in the program. These professionals serve directly in combat units and have a pressing need for knowledge and skills in effective interventions for mental health prevention, psychoeducation, and crisis response. A key selection criterion was the absence of prior CBT training.

The educational and methodological support for the training was provided by our partners at the Ukrainian Institute for CBT. Live online sessions were conducted by accredited CBT supervisors and trainers. Participation in the program was entirely free of charge for the selected candidates.

Due to various factors—primarily the unpredictability of military service and unstable learning conditions—not all participants completed the program. However, 36 professionals successfully finished the training, fulfilled the final assessment requirements, and received certification in low-intensity CBT interventions.

The project continues beyond its initial phase. Fifteen graduates have joined a supervision group led by an accredited CBT supervisor with military experience. This allows them to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills under supervision, addressing real-life cases from their service.

Participants provided positive feedback regarding the content, format, organization of the training, and the expertise of the instructors and supervisors (we are including access to the final feedback responses). Many also expressed gratitude to all those involved in the project.

We deeply appreciate EABCT's consistent and systematic support for the Ukrainian CBT professional community, especially those who combine psychological assistance with military service. The war is ongoing, and Ukrainian civilians and military personnel continue to endure unprecedented trauma and upheaval, making them vulnerable to future mental health challenges.

We are grateful for the opportunity to extend this project for another season. Our plan is to recruit and begin training a new group this spring.