

# Tetiana & Viktor Brazhenko

Ukraine

For many displaced people with disabilities, finding accessible shelter is a significant challenge. Tetiana and Viktor Brazhenko, a couple in their sixties, now live in a collective site in Rivne, in west-north Ukraine. Their lives changed dramatically in the early months of the invasion. Before the war, they lived in Avdiivka, a city almost entirely destroyed by hostilities and subsequently occupied. A month into the war, Viktor suffered paralysis, and with local hospitals shutting down, access to medical care became nearly impossible. Left with no other options, they evacuated to Rivne in May 2022 and settled in a collective site. Tetiana cared for Viktor while facing the challenges of displacement, including navigating social care services and managing Viktor's wheelchair herself whenever they needed to leave their room. These difficulties also hindered their integration into the host community.



**CCCM Intervention.** The local NGO Integration Center, in collaboration with the CCCM Cluster and local authorities, has

designed and secured funding from the Country-Based Pooled Fund for two CCCM projects. The first project facilitates area-based approach by establishing a local "one-stop shop" hub, bringing together state service providers, humanitarian actors, and spaces for integration events for both IDPs and the host community. The second focuses on equipping a local dormitory, which is hosting Tetiana and Viktor, with disability-friendly infrastructure and relocating low-mobility IDP households from remote sites to the larger city, ensuring better access to healthcare and essential services. Relocated households were supported through the process by the Integration Center CCCM mobile teams.



These interventions transformed the daily lives of Brazhenko family. The Integration Centre's CCCM team consistently supported the family in receiving emergency assistance and connecting to local state services, including social benefits and healthcare. The installation of accessible infrastructure,



such as ramps, an electric lifter, widened doors, and inclusive WASH facilities, enabled residents with mobility challenges to fully participate in community life. By addressing these barriers to movement, the initiative empowered Tetiana and Viktor to take part in events organized at the NGO Integration Center hub, helping them regain their independence.



**Conclusion and Impact.** Today, with the support of CCCM, Tetiana and Viktor case illustrates the transformative power of facilitated access to services and accessible infrastructure, demonstrating that a truly inclusive approach to displacement response goes beyond shelter — it restores independence, dignity, and the ability to rebuild lives.

Since April 2024, the NGO "Integration Center" has been working to make life more comfortable and stable for internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in collective sites across the Rivne region. This effort is part of the project "Targeted and Recurrent Sectoral

Humanitarian Assistance for Vulnerable IDPs Affected by the Conflict in Ukraine and Residing in Collective Sites in the Rivne Region." With support from the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund, the team is implementing solutions that go beyond immediate aid, providing people with the tools they need for long-term self-sufficiency.

### **Ensuring Barrier-free Access in the Collective Site**

In one of the largest dormitories in the Rivne region, home to over 80 displaced persons, long-overdue improvements have finally been made. A ramp was installed, doorways were widened, an elevator to the second floor was set up, and restrooms were renovated to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.