

In April 2022, as shelling intensified in Sievierodonetsk, Luhansk region, Svitlana Zubko and her family had to make a difficult choice: stay amidst the danger or flee into the unknown. With her husband, 90-year-old grandmother, father in a wheelchair, 7-year-old daughter Nastia, and their pet rabbit Rada, Svitlana embarked on a challenging journey to safety. "A friend shared a phone number, assuring us: 'Myroslava will help you.' She didn't know us, but her warmth and confidence gave us hope," Svitlana recalls. Upon arriving in Khmelnytskyi region, they were met with incredible kindness and support.

### **CCCM Intervention**

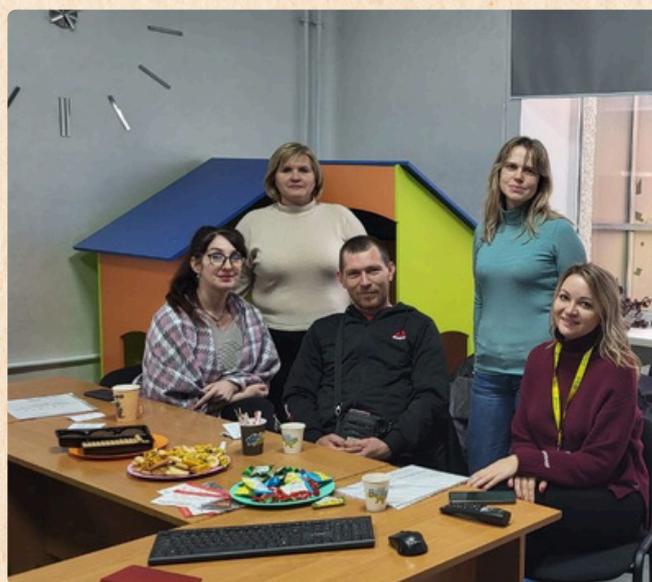
The CCCM Cluster, through the Rokada Foundation, provided critical support at the collective site in Kotyurzhyntsi, where Svitlana's family settled. The team carried out essential renovations, including replacing doors, installing a wheelchair ramp, repairing the roof, and setting up a children's playground. They also equipped the site with household appliances and provided cleaning supplies, improving living conditions for all residents.

Svitlana now works as a social worker at the site, where she ensures adherence to shelter rules, represents IDPs' interests, and offers emotional support to residents. Her personal experience of displacement helps her connect deeply with those facing similar challenges, offering them comfort and guidance.

### **Community Empowerment and Leadership**

Svitlana's proactive nature led her to establish the NGO "Dream and Act for Ukraine" with the support of the CCCM Cluster.

The Rokada team guided her through the process, from organizing informational sessions and connecting her with experienced activists to providing legal assistance. On November 2024, her NGO was officially registered, aiming to support vulnerable people and contribute to community development.



### **Conclusion and Impact**

Svitlana's resilience and leadership demonstrate how, even in the toughest circumstances, one can find strength and inspire others. "A strong woman is not broken by circumstances," she says. Her story is a powerful example of the CCCM Cluster's mission to create safe and supportive environments where displaced people can rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

