



CAPACITY STRENGTHENING
ACTIVITIES FOR CSOS
IN UKRAINE: LEARNING
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTENTS

Conclusions and recommendations	03
Chapter 1. Analysis of the present proposal for NGOs' education	08
Chapter 2. Requests and educational opportunities for NGOs' in Ukraine	12
Chapter 3. The mechanism for searching and selecting educational initiatives	14
Chapter 4. Participation experience. Assessment of usefulness and quality of trainings	22
Chapter 5. Practical application of knowledge and its impact	31
Chapter 6. Needs faced by NGOs'	34
Chapter 7. The strategy for national organizations/donors that create educational opportunities for ngos	37
Chapter 8. Providers' approach to identifying topics and formats of training	39
Chapter 9. The organizations of process and follow-up support	42
Methodology	45
The profiles of organizations surveyed	47

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of proposals for education

- **The educational services market in Ukraine offers a wide range of opportunities for building the capacity of NGOs.** In the past six months (from February to July 2025), at least 150 training sessions have been held on various topics.
- **85% of all training sessions focused on strengthening organizational development**, with the remaining 15% being dedicated to professional skills development.
- **The most common topics covered in organizational development trainings covered fundraising** (19 events), financial management (12), organizational capacity building (12), community building (11), and partnership development (11).
- **Most of the trainings offered by NGOs were conducted online** (48%). However, the percentage of offline events was also quite substantial (39%), while 13% were held in a hybrid format.
- **Offline events** were most frequently organized in Kyiv and in the relatively safer western regions across Ukraine.
- **Announcements about training opportunities rarely included detailed criteria for the selection of participants** — only 19% offered a clear description of the characteristics of the target audience for which the trainings were intended. In most cases, the specification referred to the organization's field of activity (by topic or the group with which it works). Only a few announcements did provide additional details on the desired level of participants' experience or the organization's duration of operation.
- **Most of the educational programs (82%) were free of charge for the representatives of NGOs.**



Assessment of the sector by consumers and providers of educational services

- **The accessibility and variety of NGO learning opportunities are assessed rather inconsistently, though the overall perception tends toward positive feedback.** The vast majority of respondents (89%) noted that they were able to obtain the necessary knowledge, despite the fact that they faced a number of difficulties and limitations.
- **The thematic supply in the market largely corresponds to the needs faced by NGOs.** For example, providers are well aware that, given current conditions, organizations are most interested in training on fundraising. Also, according to the content analysis results, the largest number of events were indeed devoted to this topic.
- At the same time, **there is a noticeable shortage of trainings on the market on the following topics: monitoring and evaluation, operational management, NGO team leadership, financial management and legal issues.** The most significant limitations are related to the lack of free, highly specialized trainings (on budgeting, operational management, or narrow communication topics), as well as trainings targeting a more experienced audience (NGOs with a long history, heads of NGOs).
- At the same time, there exists a certain mismatch between NGO needs and the learning formats. **Both organizations and providers prefer offline events, though such opportunities remain insufficient** due to limited resources.
- **Overall, the range of available learning formats aligns with NGO preferences for: trainings, workshops, mentorship and webinars.** Among providers, there seems to be an increasing trend toward “peer learning”, i.e., a format in which participants obtain knowledge, exchange experience and skills directly with each other rather than solely through an instructor or expert. Nevertheless, this approach has not yet gained significant popularity with NGOs.
- **The quality of trainings** aimed to strengthen organizational capacity is **assessed by NGOs inconsistently.** A majority of respondents rated them positively (56%), whereas about one-third (35%) gave lower evaluations - “satisfactory” or below. Such differences can be largely attributed to the fact that the market includes both experienced, responsible training providers and those who lack sufficient expertise or organizational skills in this area.
- **Training quality is most often criticized** for being too abstract or superficial, failing to satisfy the specific needs of organizations — particularly, by overlooking their level of development and local context — as well as for uninteresting delivery of material by lecturers or trainers. Less frequently, low evaluations are attributed to programs being too complex or expensive, or to the trainings being imposed and conducted merely “for reporting purposes,” which are often irrelevant to NGOs.
- Among key factors enhancing the effectiveness of educational programs are **maximum customization, practical content, group work and peer exchange, as well as interactive and professionally delivered instruction.** Additional aspects that make trainings more valuable and useful for participants include **the involvement of experts from various sectors, the provision of ready-to-use templates and practical tools, careful selection of participants** (depending on the training topic; either matching similar expertise and working conditions or ensuring diverse experiences), **comfortable learning conditions, a balance between hard and soft skills development, and the use of a reliable online platform** for learning, coordination, and storing materials.

Motivation for participation and logic of selecting education opportunities

- **NGOs see the main value of participating in educational projects in the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills (65%).** At the same time, other important motivations remain the potential to establish professional connections (49%) and to gain an external perspective on their organization's activities (32%).
- **Participation of NGOs in training programs is mostly voluntary,** being initiated either by the staff themselves (69%) or by the leadership of an NGO (41%). Also, **more than one-third of respondents reported that over the past two years they attended trainings at the request of donors,** being unable to withdraw from participation.
- **About half of the organizations (47%) have a training plan in place that is aligned with their needs and strategic goals of their activities.** Almost as many NGOs (45%) do not design such plans, instead participating in trainings on an ad hoc basis, which depends on available opportunities.
- **Instead, most training providers have capacity development strategies for NGOs** aligned with their own missions and values. International providers note the existence of long-term strategic plans, while Ukrainian ones usually operate based on short-term, tactical plans focused on the coming year.
- **The key factors influencing the choice of a specific educational opportunity include the topic, participation format, and the duration of an event.** Generally, offline activities are preferred such as trainings/workshops/mentorship programs/seminars either short-term (1–3 days) or medium-term ones (up to two weeks).
- **The top five incentives** for NGOs to participate in training (aside from gaining knowledge) are: project grant support, offline format, travel opportunities, a well-known coach or lecturer, institutional development funding, and trust in the organizer. Other significant (though, less decisive) factors include: recommendations or feedback from colleagues, open access to materials after training completion, the retreat component, participation of well-known organizations, and the availability of mentoring.
- **The main deterrents to participation** include: lack of time among team members, high course costs, inconvenient event locations, lack of expense reimbursement and personal or family obligations (such as the need for childcare).
- **The participation in training programs has strengthened the organizational capacity and sustainability of civil society and charitable organizations:**

52% reported significant improvements in their operations over the past two years

42% observed insignificant changes

The key value of such training lies in updating knowledge and skills (65%) and networking opportunities (49%). Among the most notable organizational changes are:

- the implemented internal policies and procedures;
- role formalization and improved internal communication;
- clearer prioritization;
- the development of internal communication and fundraising strategies;
- transition to electronic document management.

- In parallel, the **application of newly acquired knowledge remains sporadic**: 49% of organizations use it “to a significant extent,” while 50% do so “to some extent.” The main obstacles are:

- 62% the lack of funds for tools;
- 58% insufficient financing for additional positions or roles;
- 56% shortage of time and staff;
- 23% resistance to change within teams;
- 22% difficulty putting theory into practice;
- 21% mismatch between acquired skills and actual needs ;
- 9% loss or limited access to training materials.

- Training effectiveness grows, when it implies work on concrete cases, focusing on practical outcomes, involving several team members, and providing mentoring or informational support after the completion of the course.
- However, the role of knowledge in strengthening organizational capacity is secondary. Instead, the key factor lies in **financial** support of organizations, particularly, grants for institutional development (**73%**).

- Donors are well aware of this. Therefore, they provide diverse financial assistance to NGOs, in the following formats: mini-grants for organizational development (covering audits, IT solutions, training), institutional grants (seldom), project co-funding, and in-kind support. Apart from that, donors offer psychological support, informational assistance (sharing opportunities, facilitating networking and partnerships), and organizational support by providing policy templates and spaces for events.

- In turn, donors noted that during the organizations of trainings they encountered the following difficulties:

- **Lack of speakers/experts for some specialized trainings and narrow topics.**
- **Taking into account security aspects** with regards to venues and logistics.
- **Maintaining the attention and motivation of training participants.**
- **Engaging training participants in case the training is dedicated to a new or unfamiliar topic, or when it is paid.**



10

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

1.

Training programs should go hand in hand with financial support (for institutional development and implementation) and **networking activities**.

2.

The training should be as customized as possible. Key tools should include: working with practical NGO cases, mentorship, consultations with NGOs before the start of classes so as to adapt programs to participants' levels and needs, and expanded opportunities for the audience to pose questions to the lecturer.

3.

The content of the training should be tailored for practical implementation and include innovative ideas (solutions for NGOs' challenges). Key tools should include: practical advice on problem-solving; ideas or action algorithms that allow reaching a new level; tools that will enable NGOs to optimize efforts.

4.

Trainings should be supplemented with ready-to-use tools and templates (e.g., sample policies, budgets).

5.

The presentation of the material should be more interactive, engaging, and delivered in the form of a game. The training should not only provide tools for work but also energize, inspire, expand consciousness, and stimulate the generation of new ideas.

6.

It is important to expand the list of trainings that would cover more specialized topics and increase the number of advanced educational initiatives for more experienced organizations/staff.

7.

Introducing clear segmentation of NGOs (e.g., by experience, region, or sector) **would also be beneficial.** Educational opportunity announcements should clearly specify the target audience segment they are intended for.

8.

Providers should adopt a systematic approach to educational work with NGOs. A shift is required from one-time events to training cycles that would repeat topics and include assessments of material learned (follow-up activities).

9.

There is also a need to introduce a unified certification system (or mutual recognition of certificates) with a view to avoiding repeated completion of obligatory trainings. NGOs should exert greater influence on shaping the content of obligatory training programs.

10.

Respondents noted the importance of creating a unified platform with a modular, “university-style” course structure, varying levels of difficulty, a material bank, and grants for NGOs, as well as aggregating up-to-date information on all available educational opportunities.

ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT PROPOSAL FOR NGOS' EDUCATION

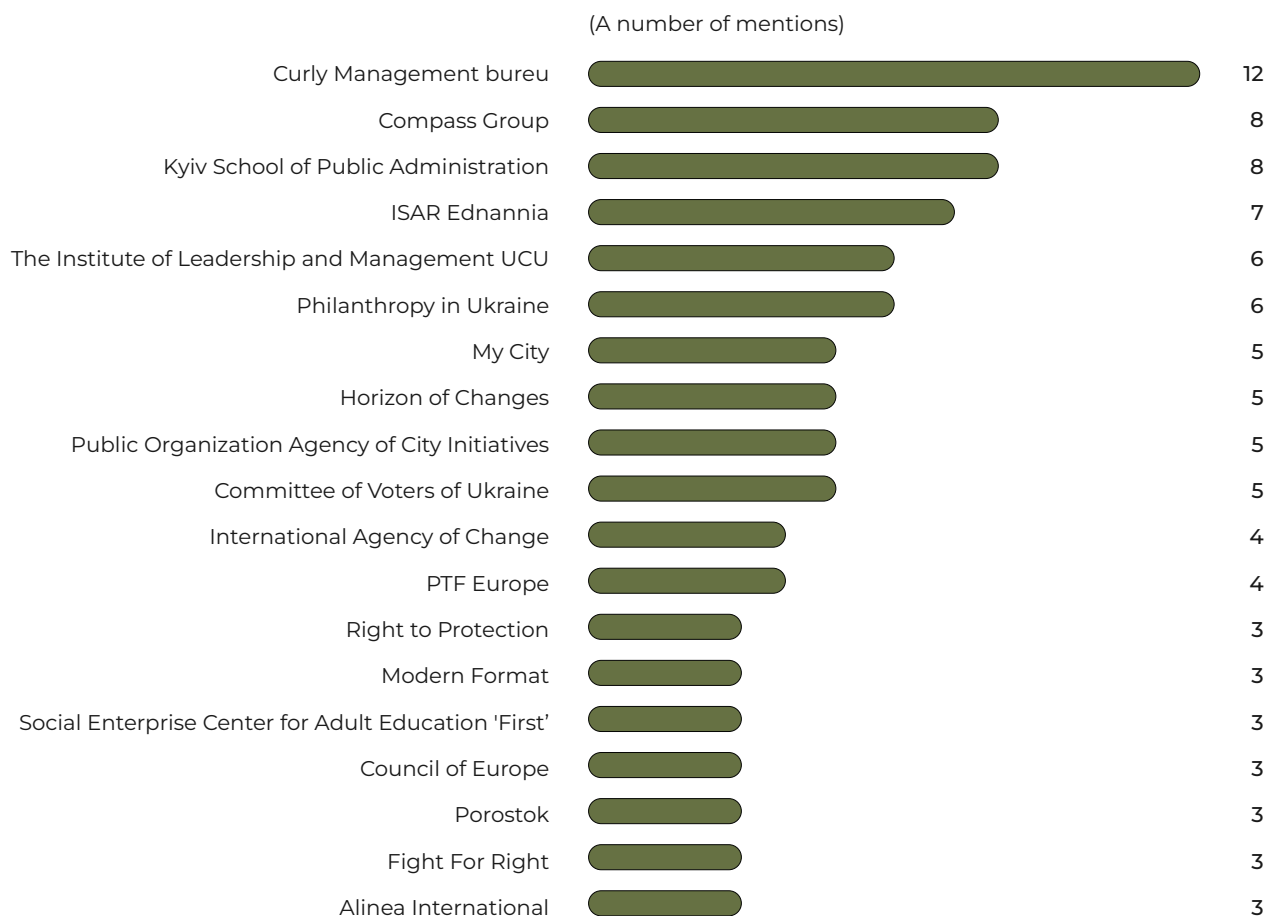
The analysis included announcements published between February 1 and July 31, 2025. This timeframe was selected, given the termination of USAID program funding in January 2025, which could have had a considerable bearing on the capacity to conduct training sessions for NGOs.

Therefore, during this period and across the identified resources, **151 educational opportunities for Ukrainian NGOs were identified.**

The events were held by 106 providers. Among the leaders (Top 5) were: Curly Management Bureau, Compass Group, Kyiv School of Public Administration (KShDU), ISAR Ednannia, the Institute of Leadership and Management of the Ukrainian Catholic University, and Philanthropy in Ukraine (*Diagram 1*).

Diagram 1

**Most active educational providers
(who organized 3 or more events)**



Most training programs (82%) were free of charge for the representatives of NGOs. A significant share of free offline trainings also covered travel, accommodation, and meal expenses (*Diagram 2*).

In terms of education regarding all NGOs that participated in the survey, **85% of the trainings were dedicated to organizational development**, while another 15% dealt with professional skills. Some of the trainings, focused on strengthening organizational capacity, were complex and combined a few themed blocks, while others placed emphasis on one topic only, which is why the number of topics on the list is bigger than 151.

The most common topics covered in organizational development trainings included fundraising, financial management, community building, organizational capacity, and partnership development (*Diagram 3*).

Diagram 2

The share of free and paid educational opportunities (%)

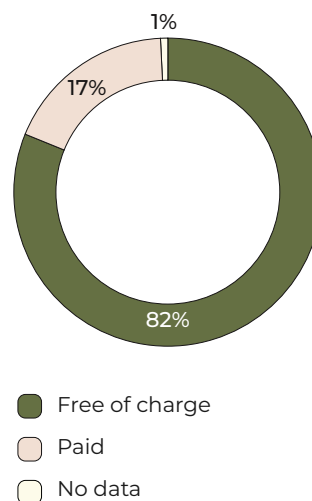


Diagram 3

Topics for trainings on strengthening organizational development conducted for NGOs

(a number of mentions)



It should be mentioned that training announcements rarely included detailed criteria of the selection of participants — only 19% provided a detailed description of the target audience to which the training was tailored. In most cases, the specification referred to the organization's area of activity (by topic or target group it works with). Only a few announcements mentioned the desired level of experience or the organization's duration of operation. **This lack of clarity poses a problem since it is difficult to expect that the same training content will be equally relevant and engaging for both newcomers and organizations with extensive experience.**

16% of all trainings were tailored to local NGOs, while 84% were open to participants from across Ukraine. Most NGO trainings were conducted online (48%). However, the share of offline events was also substantial (39%) (*Diagram 4*).

Offline trainings were held in Kyiv or in Ukraine's safer western provinces (most often in Lviv and the Carpathians) (*Diagram 5*).

Diagram 4

The share of trainings held online and offline навчання (%)

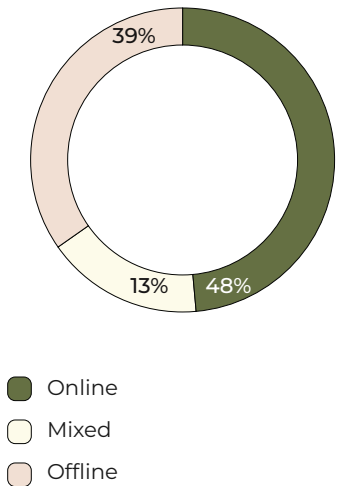
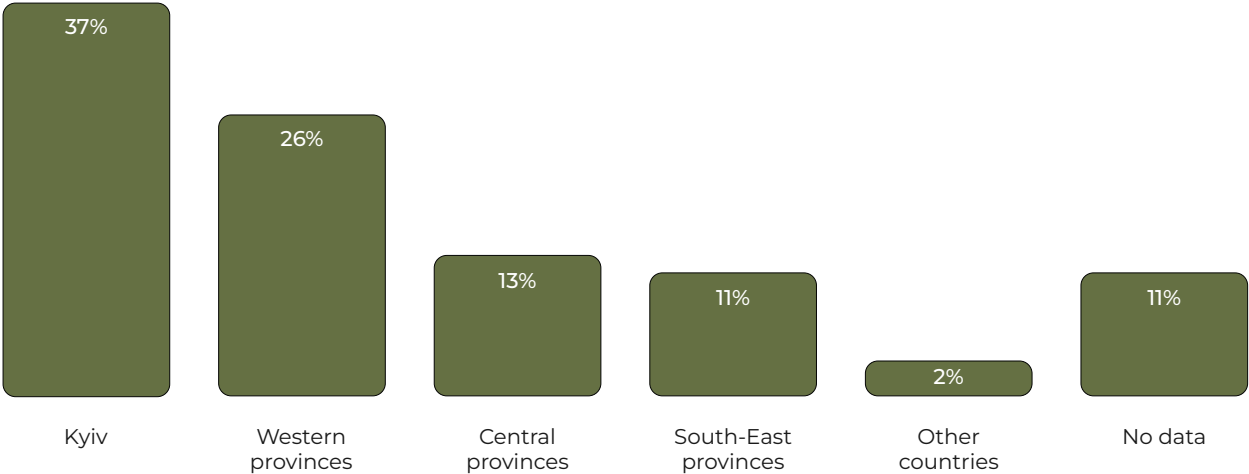


Diagram 5

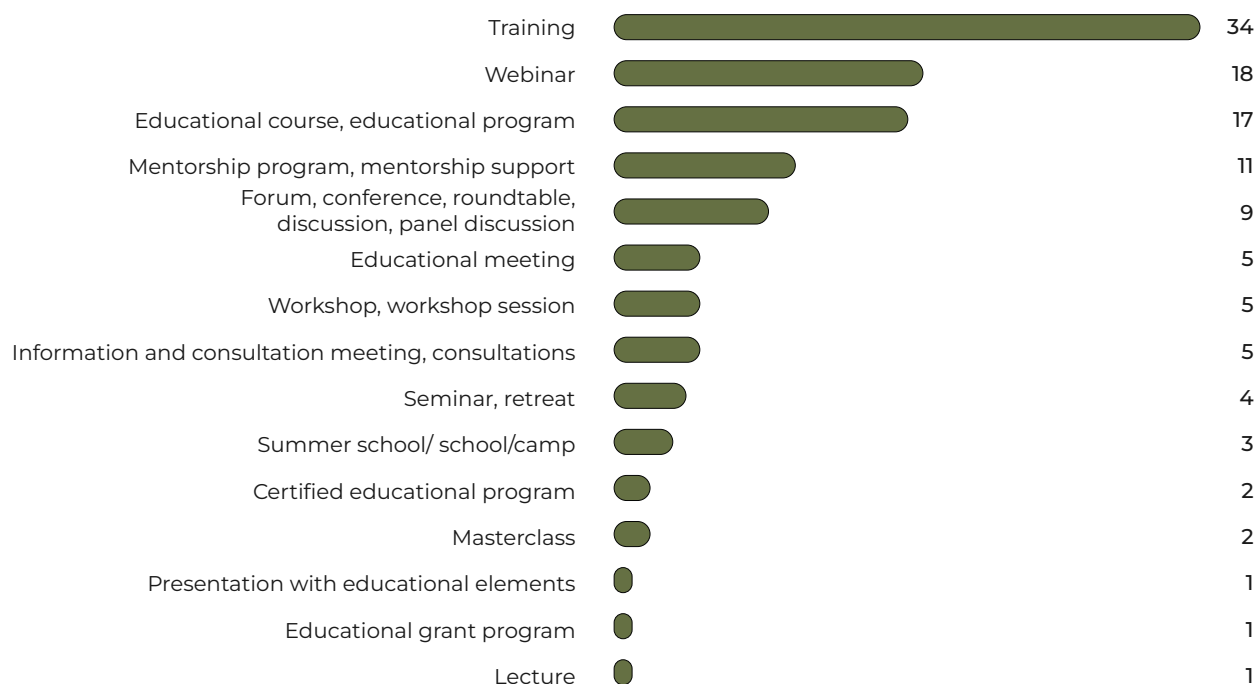
Venues for offline trainings (%)



Most trainings were conducted in the format of workshops, webinars, and educational courses. The majority of workshops were held offline, whereas most educational courses took place online. All paid initiatives were offered either in offline or mixed formats (with a mandatory in-person component). Every tenth initiative included an element of mentoring support (*Diagram 6*).

Diagram 6

Training format (%)



REQUESTS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGOS IN UKRAINE

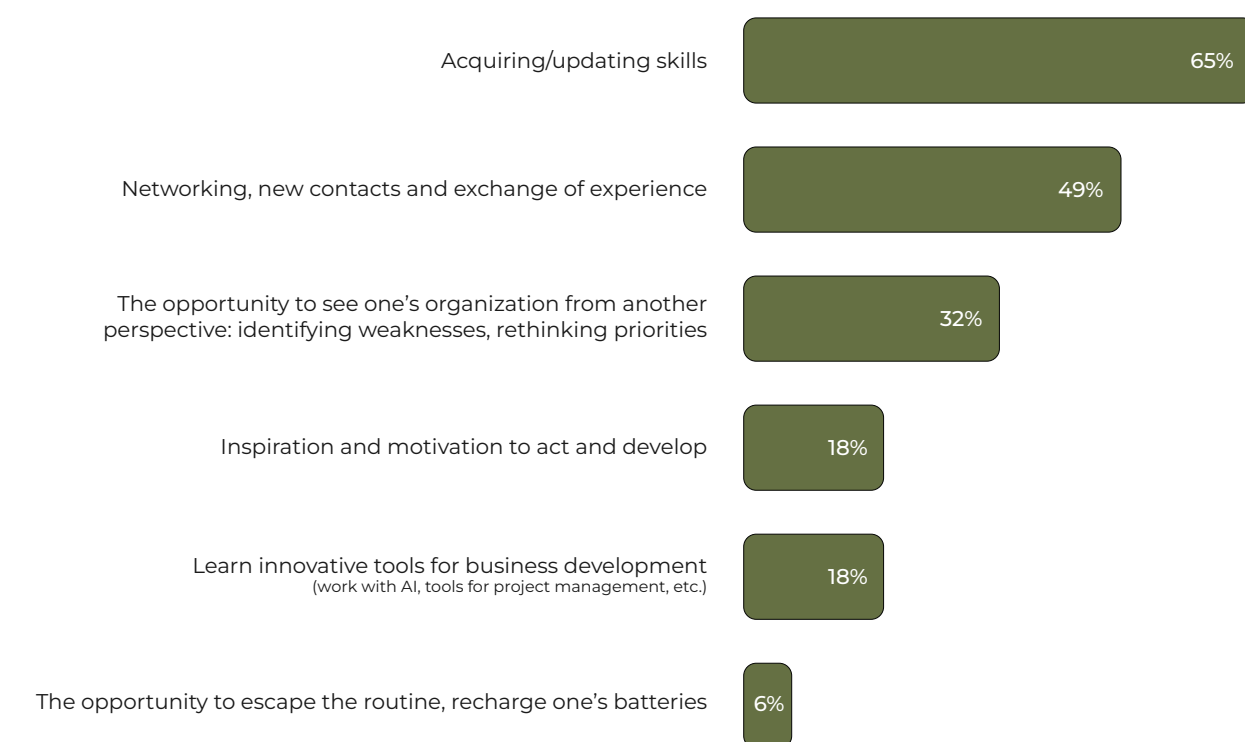
2.1. NGOs' demand for training opportunities to enhance organizational capacity. Motivation for learning

Civil society and charitable organizations, both at the national and local levels, evince a strong interest in trainings aimed at strengthening organizational capacity¹.

The respondents see the main value of such a program in the opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills (65%). At the same time, important motivations for participation include the prospects of establishing professional contacts (49%) and receiving an external perspective on their organization's activities (32%) (Diagram 7).

Diagram 7

What is the main value for you in terms of attending trainings on strengthening organizational capacity? (no more than 2 answers)



¹ However, it should be kept in kind that the survey covered only those NGOs that had participated in organizational capacity-building trainings within the past two years. Therefore, training is an integral part of their organizational culture.

Motivation for participating in trainings is different across various categories of NGO staff. The less managerial the role of the respondents is, the more they value the opportunity to develop knowledge and hone skills. Also, for specialists of the operational level, the following types of motivation are more relevant: breaking away from routine and recharging their batteries with inspiration, while for managers, it is more important to gain an external perspective on their organization.

It is also important to note that some organizations, mostly larger and more experienced ones, **hold internal trainings on their own**, for example, in the format of onboarding sessions, internal mini-workshops, or knowledge-sharing sessions after external courses. The pros of such an approach include contextual relevance (when the content corresponds with the organization's strategy, processes, and team level) and the effective use of the team's expertise.

2.2. Accessibility of educational opportunities for strengthening organizational capacity for NGOs in Ukraine

The market for training services aimed at strengthening the organizational capacity of civil society organizations in Ukraine has grown significantly over the past three years, primarily due to the support of international organizations, which intensified after the outbreak of the full-scale war.

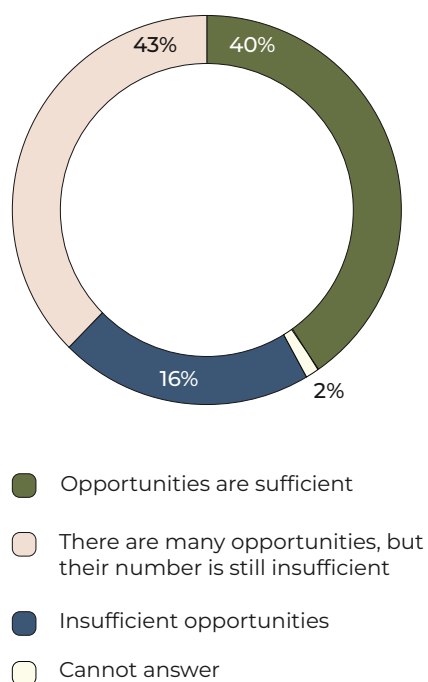
However, according to the survey findings, most representatives of NGOs (59%) feel the need for an expanded range of training opportunities (Diagram 8).

This inconsistency in assessments can possibly be attributed to the fact that, according to NGO representatives, the training services market is quite chaotic as in some areas there is an oversupply of opportunities, while in others there is a noticeable shortage. For example, there is a clear lack of specialized programs on certain topics (such as budgeting, various types of fundraising, and ethical communications) or for specific target audiences - organizations' leadership, experienced professionals, and narrow specialists.

Most often, limited access to training is associated with the high cost of relevant certified programs and courses. According to NGO representatives' assessment, free training opportunities are sometimes too superficial, being aimed primarily at beginners in the field, whereas more advanced and in-depth programs tend to be expensive and not always accessible to NGOs.

Diagram 8

How do you, in general, assess the current selection of opportunities for training on enhancing organizational capacities of NGOs in Ukraine?



THE MECHANISM FOR SEARCHING AND SELECTING EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

3.1. Specific features of searching for information on relevant educational initiatives

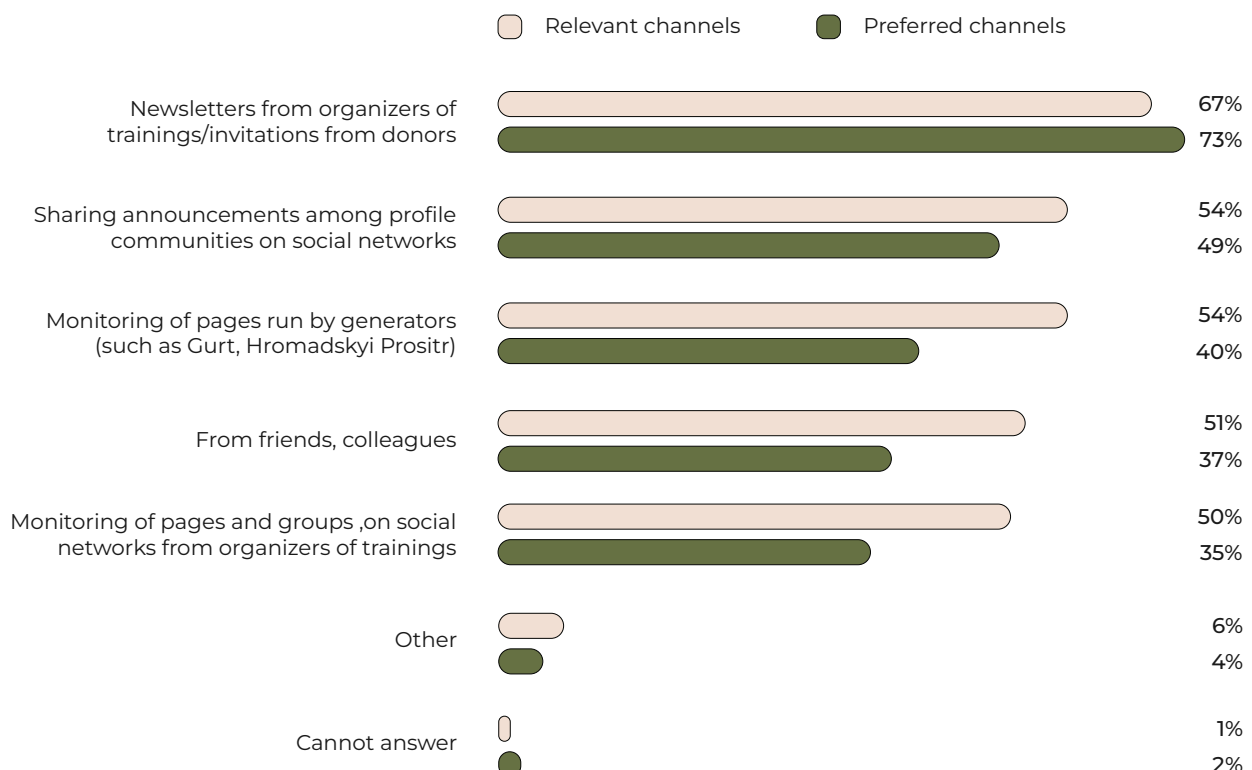
The vast **majority of NGOs receive information** about available educational opportunities for strengthening organizational development from **several different sources**. **The main communication channel is newsletters and invitations from training providers** (mentioned by 67% of respondents).

However, at least half of the organizations also receive information from professional communities on social networks, from generators of announcements (such as Gurt and Hromadskyi Prostir), from friends or colleagues, and from the information resources of training providers (*Diagram 15*).

The more experienced an organization is, the more often it receives information on trainings from newsletters/invitations from training organizers. In contrast, newly established organizations more often learn about available opportunities through professional communities on social networks (*Diagram 9*).

Diagram 9

Channels of information on educational opportunities (unlimited number of answers)



The effectiveness of spreading information about training opportunities depends not only on the chosen communication channel but also on the established culture of information sharing, in particular, on the regularity, transparency, and quality of the materials presented. Effectively all research participants noted the existence of certain challenges in this area.

Quite often, **information about training events is published too late** — only a few days prior to the training itself, or even just on the very eve of its beginning. As a result, organizations are unable to plan their time or mobilize the necessary resources in advance.

Also, participants also noted that **not all information about educational opportunities is publicly available**. Some announcements circulate only within certain circles or networks, which means that other participants learn about the opportunities only post factum.

« *If you are not deeply immersed in the nonprofit ecosystem, I cannot say that information is equally accessible to everyone. Very often, you need to be subscribed to certain people or organizations to stay informed.* »

— A national NGO

In order to improve NGOs' awareness of available educational opportunities, it would be advisable to introduce:

- **A newsletter digest** on training opportunities (via email).
- **A single Telegram bot or mobile app which aggregates training programs** (with an option to search for courses by topic and date).
- **Public social media groups for specialists in specific fields** (e.g., fundraisers, project managers), where information on training opportunities from various providers would be shared.
- **An online portal offering information on all current training programs** (to be updated daily).

At the same time, according to some participants, **there is no need to create additional resources** for sharing information about training opportunities for NGOs, as similar ones already exist. Instead, **it would make more sense to focus on improving existing platforms by introducing new features**.

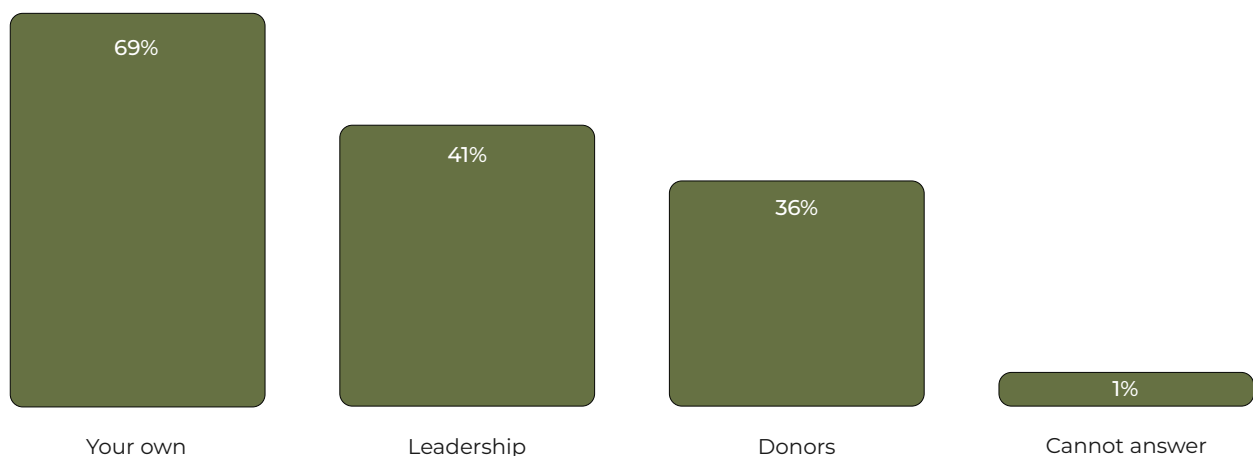
3.2. The logic of selection of educational initiatives by NGOs

It makes sense to analyze the logic behind NGOs' selection of training initiatives across three dimensions: freedom of choice, systematic approach, and selection criterial (which, in turn, are divided into primary and secondary categories).

In terms of freedom of choice, it is worth noting that **NGOs' participation in training is in most cases voluntary**, occurring either at the initiative of staff members (69%) or management (41%). At the same time, over one-third of organizations attended training in the past two years at the request of donors, without being able to refuse participation (Diagram 10).

Diagram 10

Whose initiative were trainings held at(in which you participated in the past 2 years)?
(unlimited number of answers)



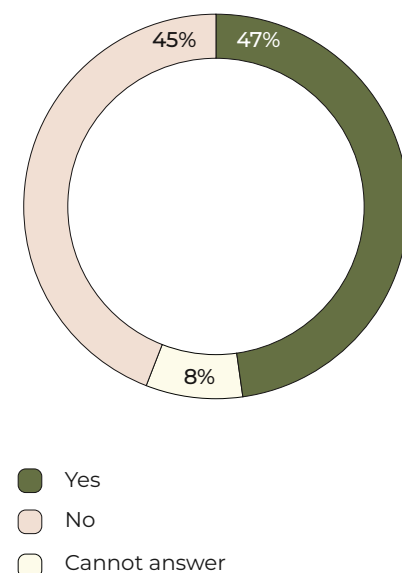
In terms of a systematic approach, about half of organizations (47%) have a learning plan in place corresponding to their needs and organizational goals. Nearly the same share of NGOs (45%) do not devise such plans, instead participating in training on an ad hoc basis - responding to available opportunities (Diagram 11). The longer an organization has been operating, the more likely it is to have a staff learning and development plan.

The key factors influencing the selection of a concrete education opportunity are as follows: topic, participation format, duration/schedule of a training.

As of late 2025, NGOs are not showing any clearly defined priorities for the selection of educational topics. The most pressing need is trainings on fundraising (Diagram 12).

Diagram 11

Do you or your organization have a training plan that aligns with your needs and goals?



The analysis of training participants' responses allows determining the level of interest in various topics depending on how long the organization has been operating. First, the younger the organization is, the larger the number of topics it takes interest in.

Second, there are also differences in thematic preferences among representatives of newly founded organizations (established in 2022–2025), young organizations (with 5–10 years of experience), and experienced ones (operating for more than 10 years).

The top-3 areas of interest for these groups are as follows:

1.

Newly founded organizations: fundraising (42%), partnerships (34%), and grant writing (31%).

2.

Young organizations: fundraising (40%), financial management (40%), and operational management (40%).

3.

Experienced organizations: operational management (32%), organizational development (32%), use of software and AI (30%), partnerships (30%), and burnout prevention (30%).

Diagram 12

Trainings on what topics do you require?
(unlimited number of answers)



Mentioned once:

advocacy, cybersecurity, informational security, teambuilding, physical and mental development, time-management, trauma-oriented approach

Finally, a difference in interests can be observed depending on the position of NGOs' representatives. Organization leaders are most often interested in training on fundraising, operational management, and partnerships. Managers working on mid-level tend to focus on fundraising, operational management, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). On the contrary, operational-level specialists more often mention a need to hone their management and leadership skills, as well as training on the use of software, particularly artificial intelligence tools.

The choice of training format remains a debated issue. Offline formats are generally more efficient in view of their better focus, interaction, and live feedback, while online formats are more convenient and accessible (*Diagram 13*).

At the same time, according to the observations of training participants, most educational events are held online (*Diagram 14*).

Therefore, **over a half of the survey's participants lack trainings held offline** (*Diagram 15*).

Diagram 13

Do you prefer trainings online or offline?

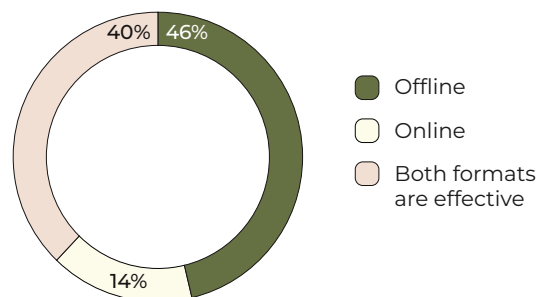


Diagram 14

Which format are nowadays trainings offered in — online or offline?

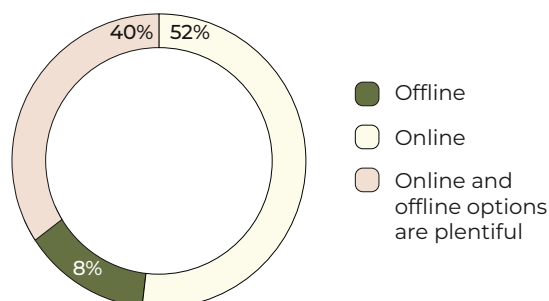
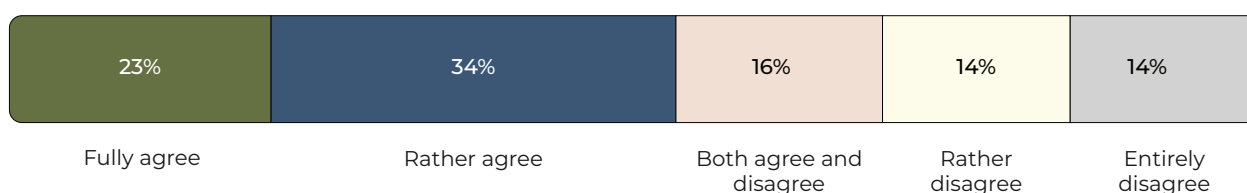


Diagram 15

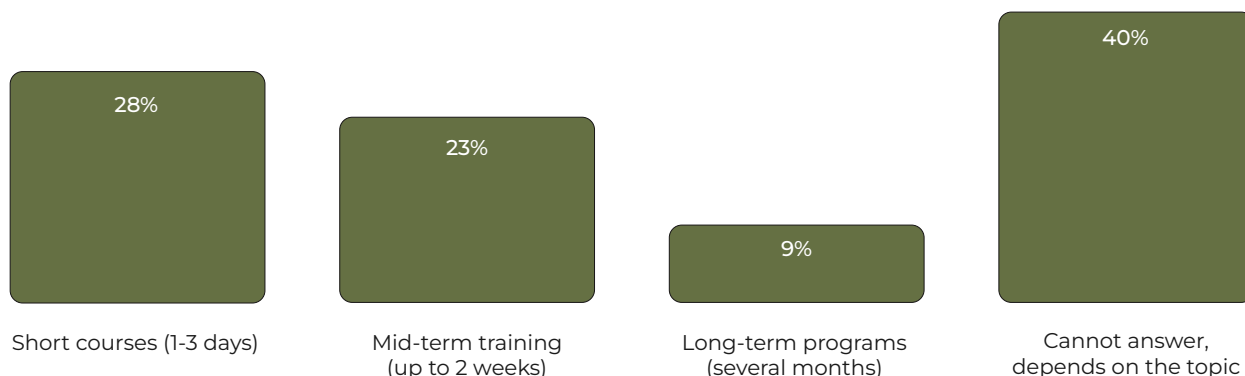
The extent to which one agrees with the statement: «I lack trainings held both online and offline»



Participants find it difficult to determine the optimal duration of training, as it largely depends on the topic. However, the majority (52%) prefers short- and medium-term programs (*Diagram 16*).

Diagram 16

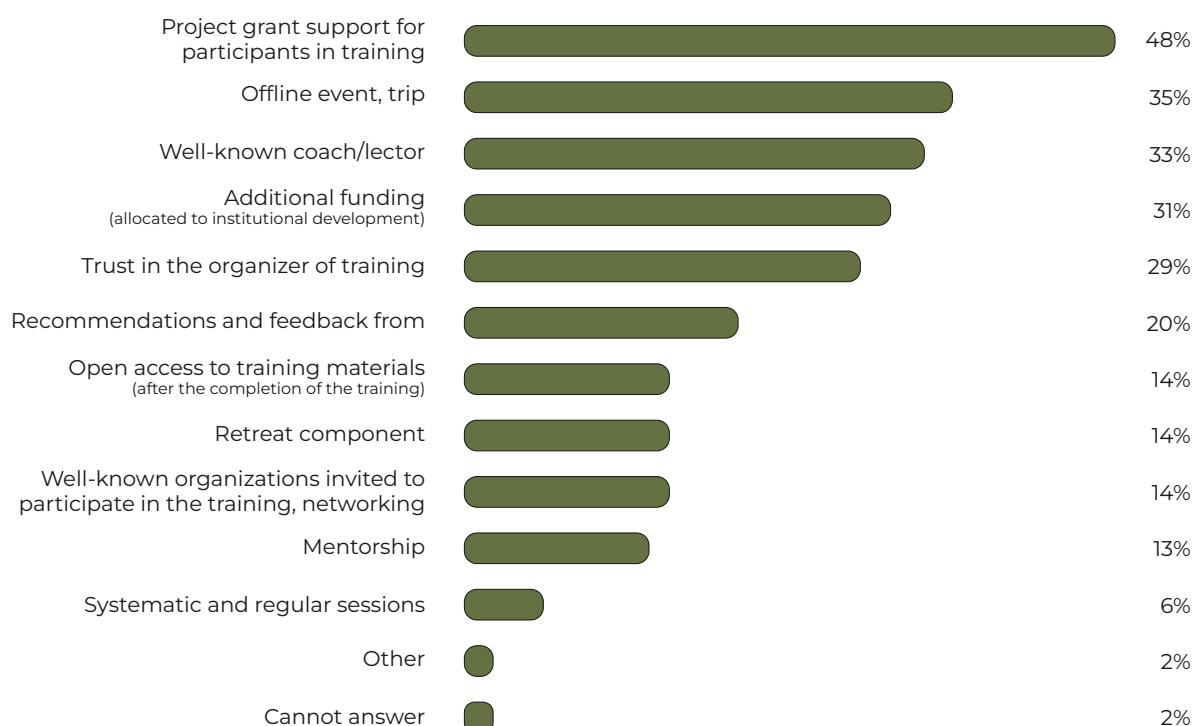
If you were to choose, what duration of training would be most convenient for you?



The top five additional incentives for NGOs to take part in training (aside from gaining new knowledge) are: grant support for projects, an offline event format, travel opportunities, a well-known coach or lecturer, institutional development funding, and trust in the training organizer. Noticeable but less important factors are: recommendations or feedback from colleagues, open access to training materials after completion, a retreat component, participation of well-known organizations and mentorship (*Diagram 17*).

Diagram 17

What could serve as an incentive for you to participate in training on a topic you take interest in?



Mentioned once:
safe space, issuance of certificate,
international status of training

Therefore, the most powerful additional incentive for participating in training programs is financial support for projects and organizations. This is to a large extent due to the reduction in NGO funding in Ukraine, which has left many organizations in constant search of resources to ensure their survival and continue helping society.

The last of the five key factors influencing the choice of training programs among civil society representatives is trust in the organizer.

The list of organizations that enjoy such trust comprises both Ukrainian and international institutions, associations, and research centers. Among those that were mentioned are: Philanthropy in Ukraine, Institute of Leadership, ISAR Ednannia, UCU Business School, Kyiv-Mohyla Business School, Norwegian Refugee Council, Horizon of Changes, CDEM, UNDP, Coordination Center, Action Aid, Council of Europe, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Save the Children, Committee of Voters, and the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF).

It goes without saying that this list is not exhaustive. Nevertheless, it does demonstrate that the most effective training organizers are large and well-known institutions able to conduct long-term and systematic work in the field of education (as opposed to one-time events) and operate with sufficient budgets.

Among the prerequisites for their success are the following factors:

- **Research on needs faced by organizations** prior to developing the content of training programs.
- **Preliminary analysis of the experience and achievements of the invited trainers**, with a focus on bringing in specialists who have a proven professional background, possessing also in-depth expertise in a specific subject area, as opposed to universal speakers “on all topics.”
- **Possession of an established standard for conducting training events** that takes into account an active learning process and scheduled breaks.
- **Competitive selection of training participants.**
- **Engagement of professional logistics companies** to arrange offline events.
- **High-quality communication** with training participants.
- **Complementing the educational component with small grants.**

Also, even if a training program should align with the needs and interests encountered by NGOs, there are **additional factors that may discourage their participation**. The most frequently mentioned among these are: lack of time among the organization’s staff, the high price of the course, and an inconvenient event location (*Diagram 18*).



Diagram 18

What most often prevents one from participating in training on a topic that one is interested in?



Mentioned once:

security, weariness, health condition, unbalanced delivery of the material without it being discussed with colleagues.

One of these factors is the high cost of training. It should be mentioned that this obstacle is interpreted differently by NGOs' representatives. In some cases, organizations are constrained by limited financial resources (the inability to accumulate the required amount). In other cases, this obstacle can be explained by the belief shared by NGOs' leaders that the proposed price is unjustifiably high or does not correspond with market conditions.

Therefore, NGO leaders would like the organizers of paid training programs to come up with various solutions that would alleviate the financial burden on organizations. For example, by providing installment payment options for long-term courses or separating fees for a basic course and additional optional modules.

Moreover, NGO representatives often emphasized that they have to decline participation in long (lasting for a week) offline training sessions due to family circumstances. For example, women noted that it is difficult for them to leave home due to childcare responsibilities.

Another negative factor is the invitation of "universal" trainers, who are unlikely to be useful for organizations that have been active in the sector for several years, already possessing solid basic expertise.



We really do not like it when one person is something of the sort "a jack of all trades — master of none". They claim to know everything and work in every field and all you have to do is give them 36, 45, (you name it) thousand Hryvnias.



— A local charitable foundation

PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCE. ASSESSMENT OF USEFULNESS AND QUALITY OF TRAININGS

4.1. Experience in the participation in trainings

An analysis of the training topics attended by Ukrainian NGOs in the past two years **reveals that organizations take interest in a wide range of subjects. The most in-demand trainings were those dedicated to fundraising.** First, with the onset of the war, many new organizations have emerged lacking experience in attracting funding. Second, the suspension of funding from USAID and the reduction of support from European donors have resulted in increased competition for financial resources.

« *From 2022 to 2024, funding was quite generous, with organizations getting used to large-scale projects and extensive coverage across Ukraine. They developed their own internal systems in HR and procurement departments, etc. In other words, they have grown, and now they are in need of funding. That said, there is less money available, while competition has intensified, which means they need to further strengthen their skills to win grants.*

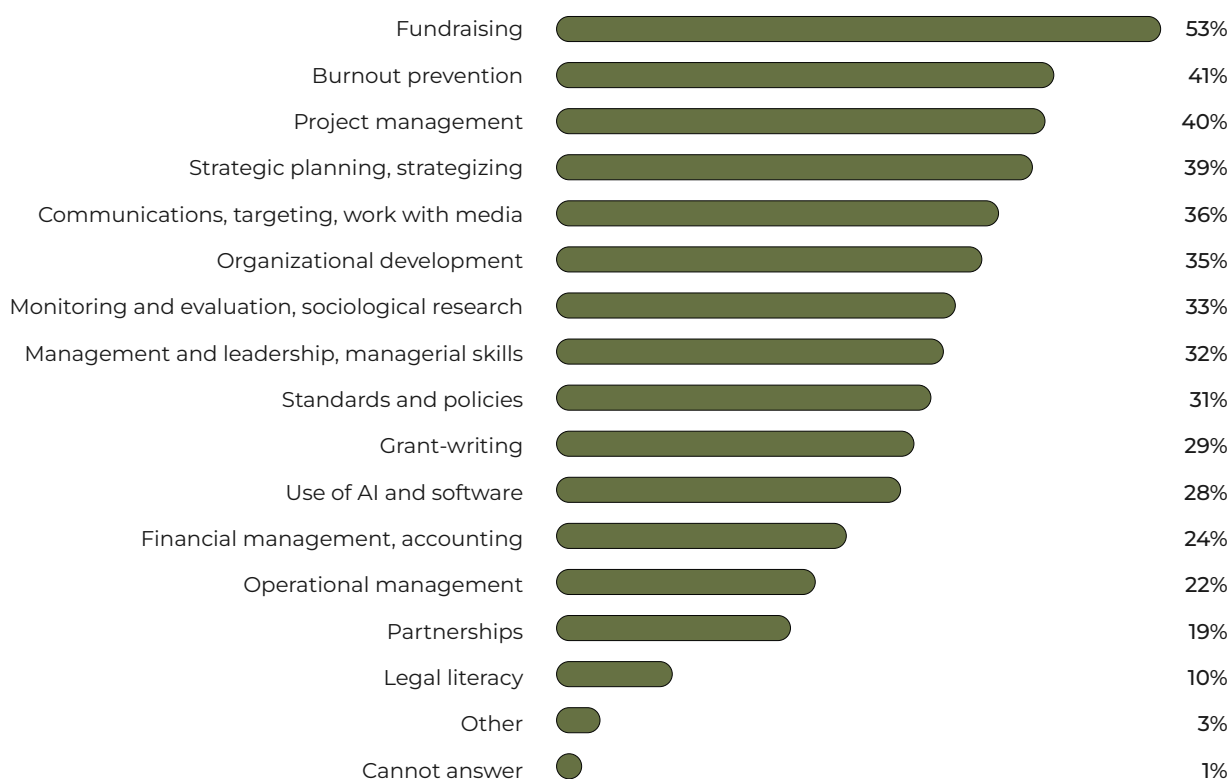
— International donors

The extensive experience of NGOs in participating in training programs enables them to assess the usefulness and quality of the trainings they have attended.



Diagram 19

What topics have you received training on over the past two years?
(unlimited number of answers)



Mentioned once:

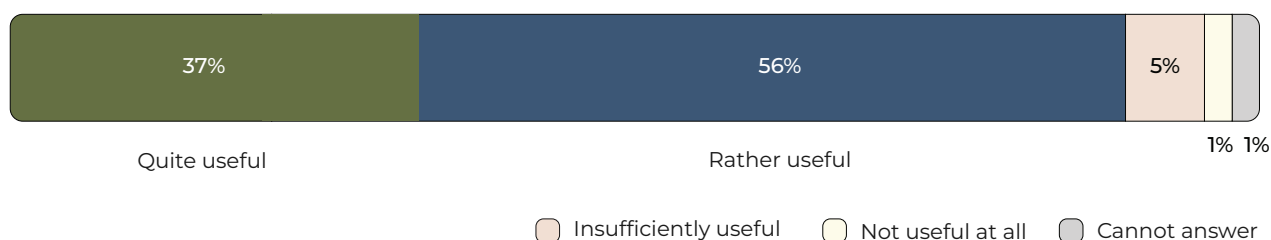
cybersecurity, IT for NGOs, risk management, security management, Geneva Convention, soft skills and administrative management.

4.2. Assessment of and prerequisites for the usefulness of trainings

The vast majority of participants in educational programs for NGOs (93%) deem them extremely useful or rather useful for strengthening their organizations' capacity. Only 6% of participants noted that they gained little benefit from taking part in the training (*Diagram 20*).

Diagram 20

How useful were the capacity-building trainings your organization has completed over the past two years?



A typical participant from the civil society sector who has attended training programs considers most of them valuable and informative. 47% of respondents reported not encountering any irrelevant or uninformative courses. At the same time, the likelihood of coming across an unsuccessful course stands at about 7% (*Diagram 21*).

Diagram 21

What percentage of the trainings which you attended in the past two years were not particularly important, not sufficiently informative, or irrelevant to you?

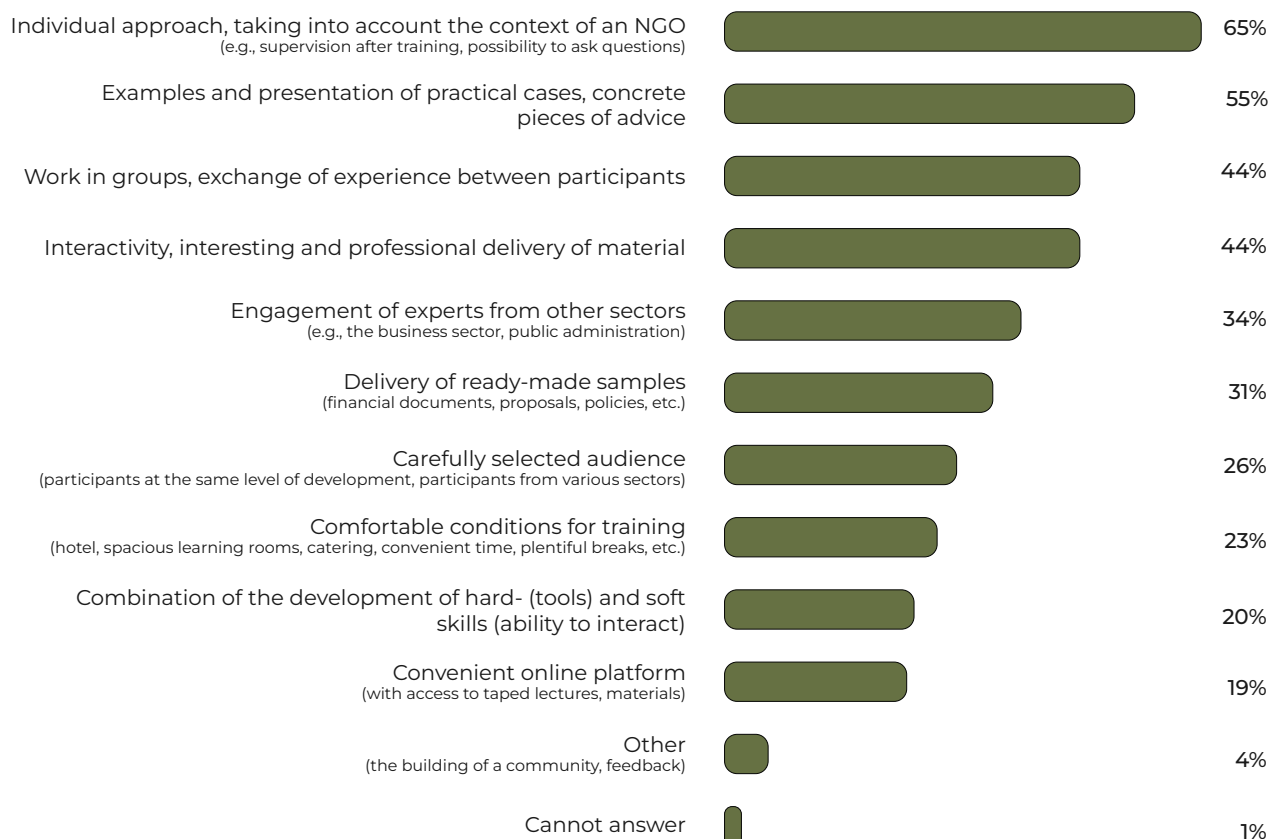
Percentage of «irrelevant» trainings



Among the key factors that enhance the effectiveness of educational programs the following were mentioned: maximum customization, a practical focus, group work and experience sharing, as well as interactive and professionally delivered training (*Diagram 22*).

Diagram 22

In your opinion, what makes capacity-building activities useful for your organization?
(no more than 5 answers)



It is of paramount **importance that the material presented has practical value and a hands-on touch.** Today, dry and abstract theory is easily accessible online. In contrast, NGOs seek solutions that cannot be found in textbooks:

- practical tips on how to solve problems;
- ideas or action algorithms that enable one to reach a new level;
- tools that help optimize efforts.



For me, organizational development activities are about clarity, in case you're stuck and don't understand which direction to move forward.



— A local public organization

Group work is valuable not only for exchanging experience but also for the opportunity to “sync up,” to compare one’s own vision with those of your colleagues’ as well as share emotions and challenges.

Additionally, NGOs recommend avoiding an excessive number of homework assignments and strict submission deadlines when devising training programs, as most specialists, despite attending the training, are still supposed to fulfill their professional duties, facing significant time limitations.

Ready-made templates and document samples enhance the effectiveness of training since they enable participants to immediately apply the knowledge obtained in practice. Such materials save time, simplify the preparation of financial reports, policies, or project proposals, and help avoid making common mistakes.

A well-selected audience is one of the key factors ensuring the effectiveness of training. Depending on the topic, it is important not to mix NGOs with different levels of competence within the same training session due to the fact that experienced and specialists new to the field require different approaches to content and depth of instruction.

It is also important to avoid involving too many participants. Otherwise, the coach may find it difficult to maintain order in the classroom, or there may not be enough time to cover the material due to the large number of questions.

Finally, various organizational aspects also exert impact on various organizational aspects. Sticking to the schedule (starting and finishing on time) allows participants to stay focused, plan their work and rest. Comfortable learning and accommodation spaces contribute to participants’ productivity. A user-friendly online platform and access to materials after the training allow participants to learn at their own pace and increase the likelihood of applying the acquired knowledge in practice.

Timely and predictable communication (Telegram groups, reminders, clear calendar), convenient logistics, and attention to safety are also highly valued.

4.3. Assessment of training quality

The majority of civil society representatives generally rate the quality of organizational capacity-building training positively (56%). However, 35% give it a negative rating — “satisfactory” or lower (*Diagram 23*).

Diagram 23

How do you generally assess the quality of NGO organizational capacity-building training in Ukraine?



In most cases training is criticized for being too abstract, failing to comply with the organization’s needs, or being presented in an unengaging manner by the lecturer or coach. Less frequently, low ratings are explained by the excessive complexity or cost of programs, the imposition of trainings conducted merely “for reporting purposes,” or their lack of relevance to NGOs (*Diagram 24*).

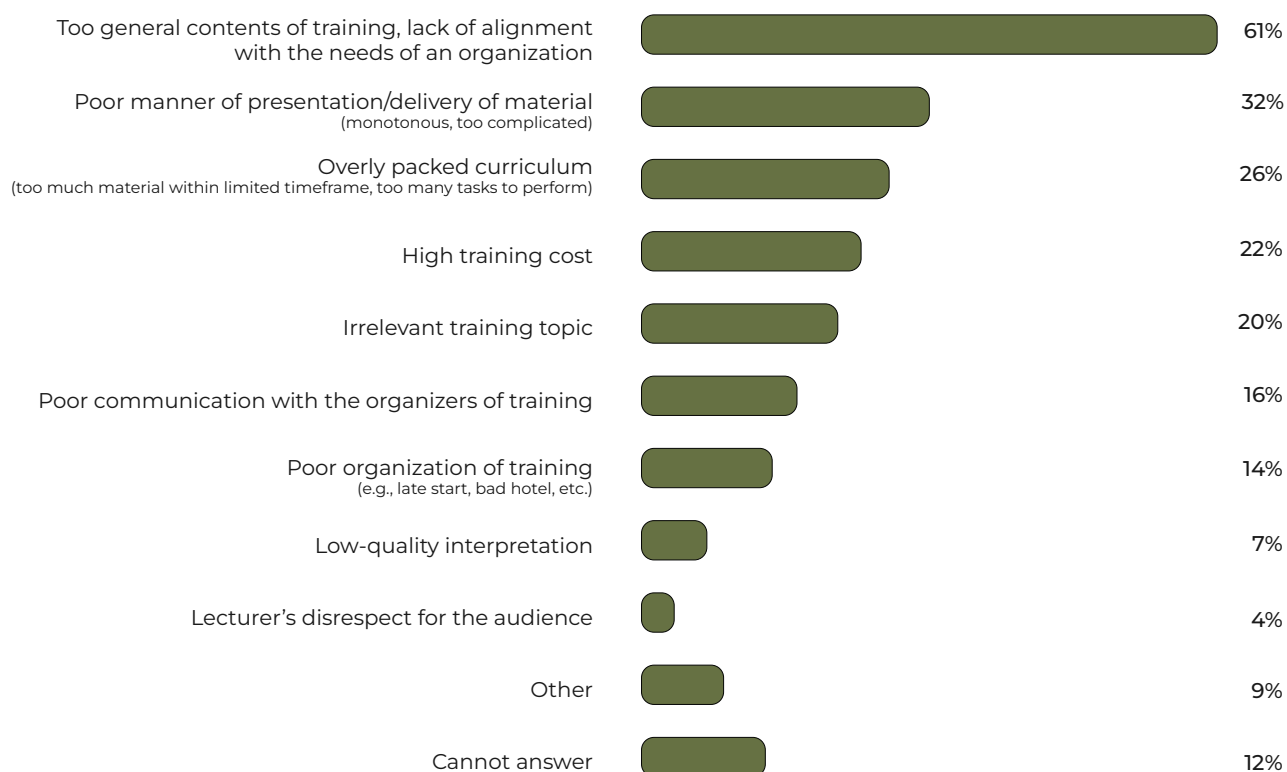
Diagram 24

Mentioned once:

lack of information, superficial training, lack of consistency, the recommendations provided do not reflect reality

What is the reason for the low evaluation of the training (satisfactory or below)?*

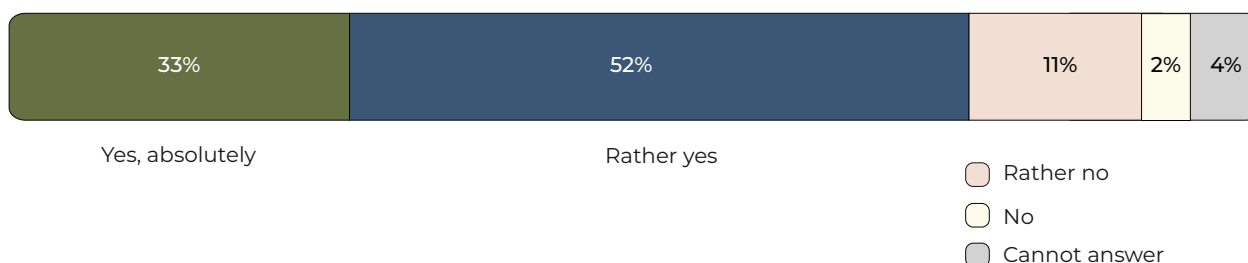
*N=69 (respondents who rated the quality of training on NGO organizational capacity development in Ukraine as satisfactory, poor, or very poor.)



In some cases, the information had no practical value for organizations because of its inconsistency with the level of development of the civil society organization or its local context. Similar problems were encountered by 13% of respondents (*Diagram 25*).

Diagram 25

Did the training programs you were engaged in correspond with the level of development of your organization and your local context?

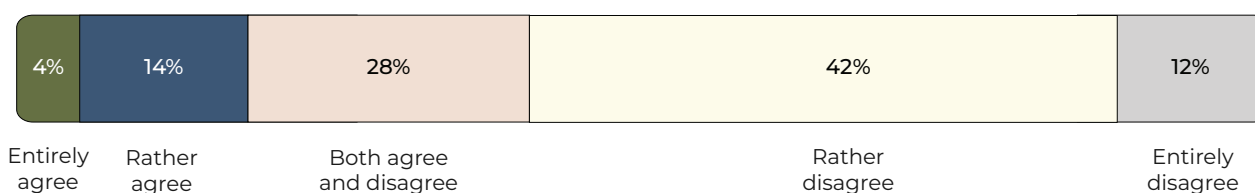


Criticisms and teaching methods mostly concerned the coach's or speaker's lack of energy and charisma, monotonous delivery of information, excessive focus on self-promotion or personal branding as well as poor skills in terms of working with large audiences. At times, coaches express their thoughts in too complex a way, which leads to listeners tiring quickly and losing concentration.

At the same time, it should be understood that **about 19% of respondents believe that there are currently many low-quality training programs on the market**, either in terms of content or because of the involvement of weak trainers (*Diagram 26*).

Diagram 26

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Many training programs are of poor quality, either in terms of the coaches or the



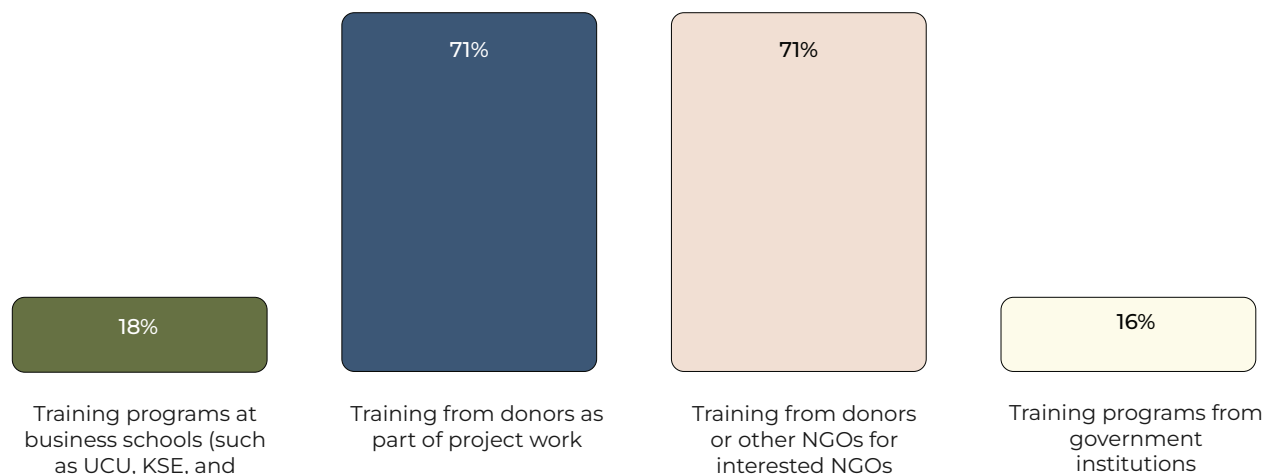
4.4. Comparing the quality of trainings from different providers

When assessing the quality of organizational development training, it is essential to bear in mind that various types of providers operate in this field: business schools (which mainly offer paid services), donors (who organize training for partner NGOs within projects), and donors or NGOs that open up educational opportunities for all stakeholders. One may assume that the quality assessments of these trainings may differ.

Over the past two years, NGO representatives have mostly participated in targeted (project-based) and open (for stakeholders) training programs offered by donors. Representatives of every fifth organization attended business schools (18%), and those of every sixth participated in training programs offered by government institutions (16%). Therefore, the market remains heavily dependent on donor-funded programs, whereas the share of business schools and the state remains relatively niche-like (*Diagram 27*).

Diagram 27

What types of training programs have you participated in over the past two years?

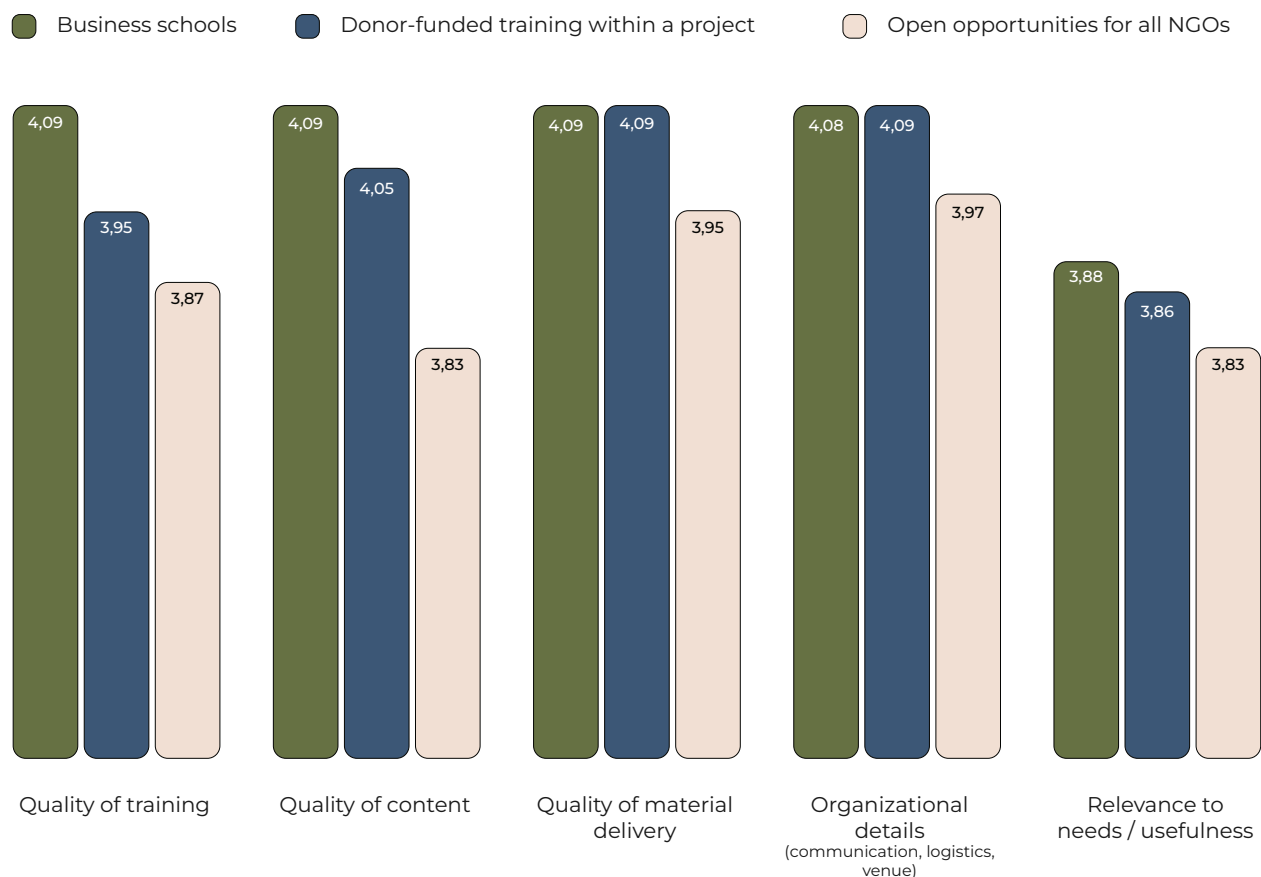


A comparison of the quality of organizational capacity-building training provided by different providers demonstrates that educational programs offered by business schools receive the highest ratings, while open opportunities for all interested NGOs receive the lowest. Despite this, all the given ratings differ only slightly, being generally interpreted as “good.” (Diagram 28).

Diagram 28

Comparison of average quality ratings of training from different providers

(On a scale from 1 (“very poor”) to 5 (“excellent”))

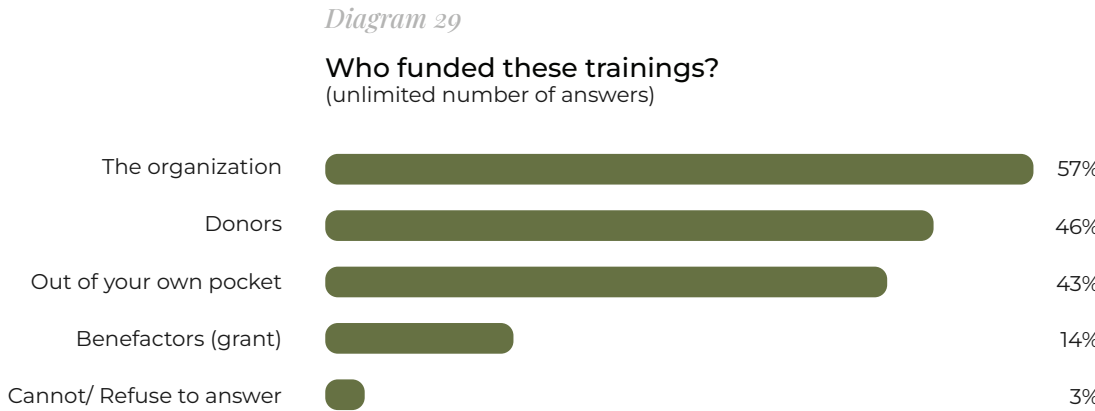


Thus, **training programs offered by business schools enjoy the best reputation in the sector** (80% of participants rate them positively, while only 14% rate them as satisfactory).

According to the representatives of NGOs, their educational products have a solid methodological foundation, a practical focus, a high level of teaching staff as well as strong networking potential.

The main barrier to attending such programs lies in the cost since many NGOs cannot afford them without scholarships/grants.

Over the past two years, 43% of NGOs have participated in trainings funded by donors, with another 14% having received scholarships for their studies. At the same time, most trainings were financed by the organizations themselves or by the participants personally. (Diagram 29).



NGOs' representatives are ready to invest in such programs, when they have a clear purpose (what specific problem the organization will solve after the training) and confidence in the instructors' expertise. Otherwise, a high price without a guarantee of relevance makes such an investment questionable.

Most participants gave a positive rating to the donor-funded **trainings conducted within project implementation** (74% of them, while 20% rated them as satisfactory or worse). Thus, these trainings generally meet basic expectations.

The major weakness of such trainings lies in their relevance to the organizations' needs. While NGOs mostly view mandatory donor trainings positively, some respondents emphasize **the destructive nature of this practice due to the frequent repetition of certain modules across different donors** (e.g, safeguarding/child protection), the mismatch between the trainings and the real needs of CSOs, or their irrelevance to the Ukrainian context.

NGOs' representatives would like to wield greater influence on the content of mandatory donor trainings and the right to decline participation. Introduction of certification for certain training programs would be appropriate to obviate the need to repeatedly complete identical trainings multiple times.

Open trainings for all interested stakeholders offered by donors are generally rated positively (70% compared to 23% who rated them as satisfactory or lower).

The strengths of such trainings include event organization (logistics and communication) and the delivery of materials. Their weaker suit is relevance and usefulness, indicating a need for better participant segmentation and more precise adaptation of the content to the level and context of the organizations.

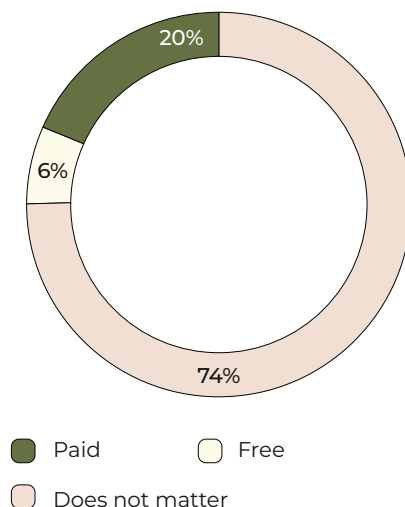
Finally, it is vital to compare the effectiveness of paid and free trainings. Over the past two years, 46% of NGOs' representatives have participated in paid trainings. Most of them do not observe any significant differences in the usefulness and effectiveness of paid versus free programs (*Diagram 30*). This partly has to do with the fact that free trainings for NGOs are covered by donors, which means their "free" nature is conditional (*Diagram 30*).

A mere 20% of respondents consider paid trainings to be more effective. At the same time, they note that the higher impact of such programs is often linked not only to the quality of content or teaching, but also to **the more responsible attitude of participants who have invested their own funds in the training**. This approach encourages greater motivation to absorb the material and to apply the acquired knowledge in practice.

Diagram 30

Which of the trainings you have completed did you find the most effective and useful?*

*N=91 (those respondents answered who participated in paid trainings over the past 2 years)



PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND ITS IMPACT

5.1. Special features of applying knowledge in practice

According to the survey, 99% of participants in organizational capacity-building trainings apply the acquired knowledge in practice. However, they do so with a different level of intensity - half of them to a great extent, and the other half only partially (*Diagram 31*).

At times, the acquired knowledge is immediately integrated into organizational processes (such as updating policies and procedures, clarifying roles, or improving the communication strategy). In other cases, it is applied on a selective basis or with a delayed effect, once a relevant task emerges.

The main obstacle to the integration of knowledge into the practical work of NGOs is a lack of resources. Organizations lack funds to implement solutions (62%) and to pay additional specialists (58%), as well as time and human resources (56%). Significant barriers also include resistance put up by the team to change and a lack of understanding of how to translate theory into practice (22%). In many cases, the content of trainings does not fully correspond with the organization's real needs (21%) (*Diagram 32*).

Diagram 31

Do you apply the knowledge gained during organizational capacity-building trainings in practice?

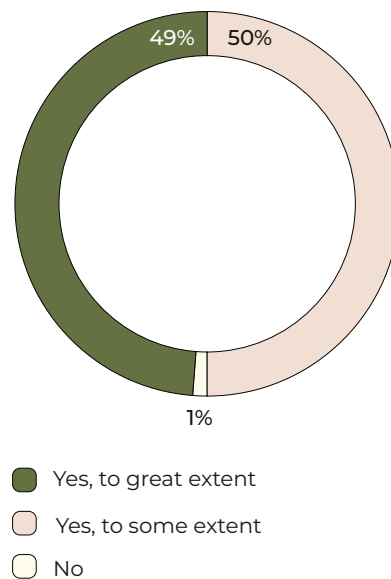
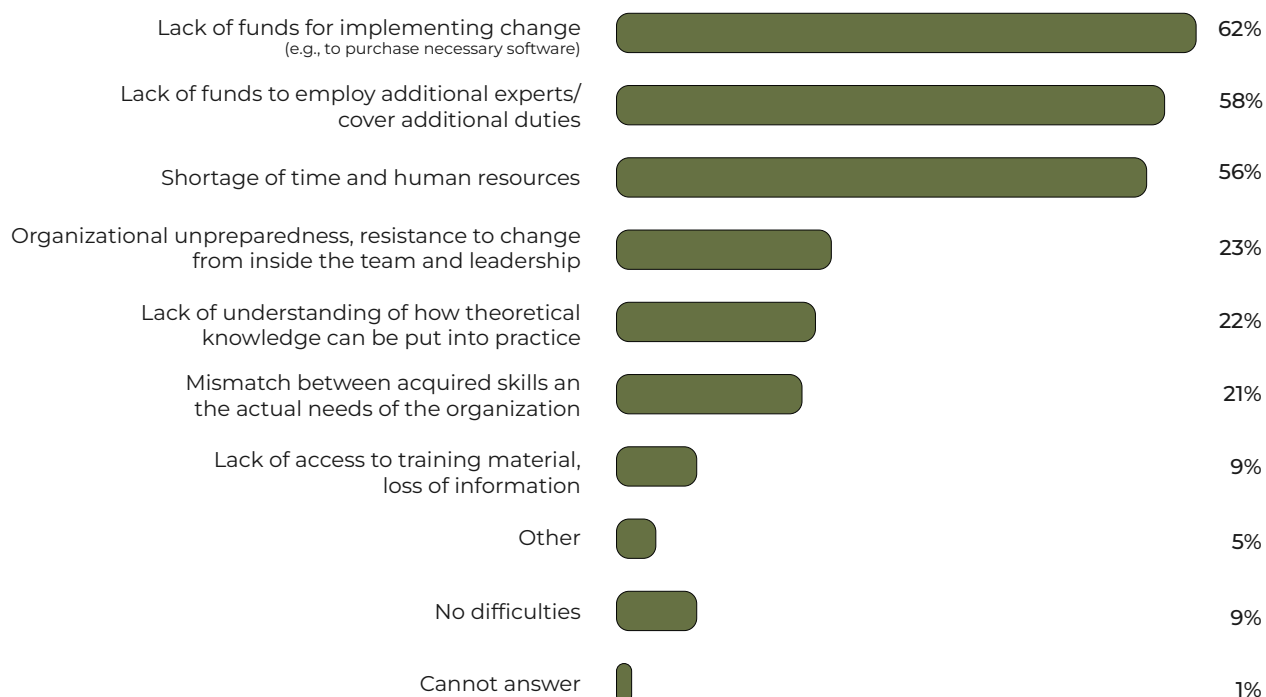


Diagram 32

What difficulties have you faced during the integration of gained knowledge in your organization?
(indicate anything relevant)



Mentioned once:

adaptation of Ukrainian standards to international ones, lack of financial support for organizing events, lack of discipline, shortage of specialized experts, bureaucracy, excessive documentation, and differences in the organization's vision for development

The collective training experience of NGOs enables them to identify several steps that transcend these barriers, enhancing the effectiveness of applying acquired knowledge in practice:

- Getting the team prepared for the training: the team approaches the training with clearly defined problems and cases, which are then addressed during the training.
- Course focuses on practical outcomes: working with real cases, providing ready-made templates, policies, and a package of materials that remain freely accessible.
- Involving part of the team rather than just one individual in the training.
- Providing mentorship or informational support after the training is conducted.
- Establishing a single platform with a modular “university-style” course structure, levels of difficulty, a repository of materials, and scholarships for NGOs.

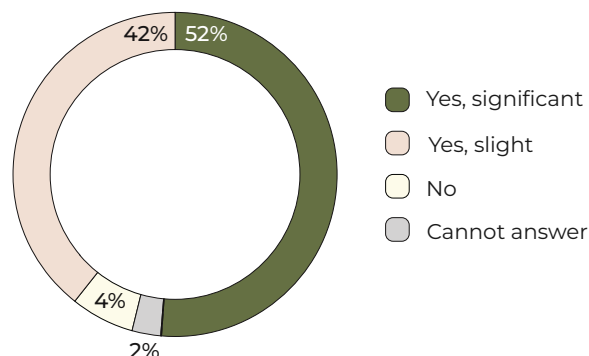
However, considering the wide range of barriers to applying acquired knowledge in practice, the question arises: to what degree have the trainings strengthened the organizational capacity of NGOs?

5.2. Assessment of the impact of educational initiatives on capacity building

According to the results of the quantitative study, participation in trainings has generally enhanced the capacity and sustainability of organizations, particularly by improving project management quality and expanding partnerships. Most NGOs do report a positive impact from the trainings: 52% observed significant changes in their work, another 42% — moderate ones, while only 4% noticed no impact whatsoever (*Diagram 33*).

Diagram 33

On the whole, have you noticed any changes in your organization's work as a result of the trainings you have completed over the past two years?



In particular, NGOs noted the following positive changes as a result of the trainings:

- Development and introduction of policies and procedures satisfying donor requirements (including those of the UN/EU).
- Formalization of roles and processes, faster onboarding, and process automation.
- Improved internal communication.
- Greater focus on priorities and identification of key areas of activity.
- Increased motivation.
- Development of communication and fundraising strategies.
- Transition to electronic document management and use of practical tools.
- Launch of grant record for young NGOs and establishment of cross-border partnerships, which results in increased volumes of attracted grant funding.
- Overall sense of confidence, reduced fear, and lower stress levels.

6.1. Thematic needs of NGOs

From their training experience, about 60% of NGOs identify topics that are poorly or insufficiently covered in Ukraine. While there are no clear outsiders, the following areas are mentioned somewhat more often in this context: M&E and sociological research, the use of software and AI as well as legal literacy (*Diagram 34*).

Diagram 34

Trainings on which topics are offered at a weak or insufficient level in Ukraine?



Mentioned once:

marketing, internal management (team leadership), risk management, security management, time management, budgeting

When NGOs' representatives point out the insufficiency or low quality of training, in some cases this is connected with the lack of training opportunities on certain topics. In this context, the following topics were mentioned: monitoring and evaluation, budgeting, operational management, NGO team leadership, accounting, and legal issues.

The problem lies not in the fact that NGOs usually turn to training only after having tried standard approaches, searching for new ideas and practical tools to rise to specific challenges. They instead often receive obvious solutions or generic tools. Most often, these criticisms concern fundraising trainings, which focus either on how to prepare grant applications or on calls to ask for money more actively.

National organizations voiced a demand for specialized training on the following topics: management during rapid scaling up and team expansion; international advocacy and cooperation with foreign media and stakeholders; people management in grant teams; grant budgeting; compliance. Local organizations were interested in learning about how to integrate into the civil society architecture and cluster systems as well as training in professional terminology.

Most training programs are designed for professionals with moderate or limited work experience, whereas opportunities for experienced staff (especially for NGO top management) are rather limited.

High-quality training on **organizational development, crisis management, partnership building or fundraising** remains largely inaccessible to less well-funded NGOs.

6.2. The needs for additional support

Most respondents (60%) believe that training and mentoring alone are insufficient for building capacity for NGOs (*Diagram 35*).

Diagram 35

To what extent do you agree with the following assertion:
“Training/mentorship alone are insufficient for building capacity building”



The strongest factor influencing capacity building is financial support for NGOs in the form of institutional development grants, while training is only the second most important prerequisite for the success of this process (Diagram 36).

Diagram 36

What strengthens your institutional capacity the most? (no more than 3 answers)



Mentioned once:

long-term grants, large-scale forums, knowledge exchange, capacity-building planning, perseverance, professional staff, salary funding

At the same time, the best effect is produced by a combination of **grants + systematic training + networking**. The fact that a quarter of respondents expressed a need for psychological support reveals the importance of wellbeing components in such programs.

Therefore, from the perspective of NGOs, enhancing organizational capacity requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the following:

- Grant support for NGOs (which implies enabling the practical application of knowledge and preserving or expanding the organizations' assets and staff).
- Filling thematic niches in the market (offering training on underrepresented topics and developing advanced or highly specialized courses).
- Reviewing existing courses so as to assess their practicality and innovativeness, as well as monitoring their efficiency.
- Complementing training programs with the options of mentoring and coaching.
- Introducing a well-thought and strategic approach to forming training groups and opening up opportunities for networking.

THE STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/DONORS THAT CREATE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGOS

In essence, most donors are focused on building civil society in Ukraine. Thus, they lend support to organizations aspiring to develop but lacking sufficient knowledge or resources to do so.

Such grand and ambitious goals require a strategic approach to designing capacity-building programs.

All international organizations we interviewed confirmed that they have long-term strategies for this area of work, which share common features and principles, namely:

- Consistency with the mission and goals with those of the donor.
- Consistency with the needs of organizations (both in terms of capacity building and maintaining engagement with the sector).
- Comprehensiveness and systematic approach.

The comprehensiveness of capacity-building strategies lies in the **simultaneous implementation of multiple areas of work, the combination of which ensures synergy**. For example, providers combine training components with tools such as networking and NGO financing (grants for institutional development or meeting organizations' needs).

The strategies of foreign providers pay significant attention to a systematic approach to working with NGOs.

As a rule, Ukrainian providers do not have a formal long-term strategy in place for strengthening NGO capacity, limiting themselves to tactical plans (typically for one year). **The full-scale war has forced providers to review their strategies for enhancing organizational development in NGOs.**

First and foremost, their efforts have become **more systematic**. Providers have refused to be engaged in one-off activities (which were often conducted in response to NGO requests or donor/partner requirements). Instead, comprehensive strategies have been introduced that include: needs assessment, capacity evaluation, a range of training on various topics, and grants for institutional capacity.



We have gradually shifted to a format where, apart from conferences and individual trainings, we implement more comprehensive programs. Last year, we launched a School of Organizational Development. Then we came to realize that this was not enough, so we also launched mentoring programs.



— An international provider

Nearly all providers noted that, after 2022, they have been **looking for opportunities to implement more customized training** tailored to the needs of organizations. Considering the fact that NGOs have gone through countless trainings during the years of war, typical courses are no longer relevant. Instead, it is important to identify current pain points and focus exclusively on addressing them.

The assessment of the needs faced by NGOs revealed a strong demand for learning from local experiences and the practices of similar organizations. In response, providers have increasingly included activities such as peer-to-peer learning, mentoring support, and in-person events facilitating communication and networking.

A significant number of providers have also become more active in funding areas that are related to institutional development and in implementing new funding formats.



PROVIDERS' APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING TOPICS AND FORMATS OF TRAININGS

8.1. Relevant topics and approaches too selecting the topics of trainings

In general, training providers possess a good understanding of the demands of civil society and charitable organizations for capacity-building training. Most of them noted that fundraising is their top priority, while also observing relatively even demand for other training areas (which corresponds to the results of quantitative surveys of NGOs). At the same time, from their perspective, the slightly more in-demand topics today are: financial management, team management/team building, monitoring and evaluation, psychological safety (burnout prevention, comprehensive psychological interaction within teams), communications (internal and external, marketing, social media). Less frequently mentioned were: data protection, partnerships and negotiation, project management, accounting, leadership, accountability.

The fact that donors have a rather good understanding of NGOs' needs is not accidental. Providers of training program deliberately analyze organizational needs drawing on a variety of data collection methods.

At the same time, a weakness of these approaches is that donors typically study the needs of their own partners or communities with which they already work in view of easier access to these groups. As a result, some donors are beginning to review their strategies to respond to the needs of a broader range of NGOs in a better way. One possible solution in this context is to conduct larger-scale sociological research.

One international donor noted that, in contrast to needs assessments, NGOs prefer to allocate flexible funding for Ukrainian organizations, enabling them to independently purchase the courses they are interested in.

At the same time, training programs are not limited to the needs expressed by NGOs. Donors propose topics they consider relevant for the long-term capacity of the sector (e.g., security policies, research ethics, value proposition, etc.). Even though organizations often take a skeptical view of the usefulness of such training, donors are confident that, over time, teams will come to better appreciate their value.



8.2. Formats of conducting trainings and the assessment of their effectiveness

Donors hold trainings in various formats. However, the most popular ones are:

- Peer Learning.
- Online courses, webinars.
- Mentorship.
- Mid-term courses lasting from 3 to 12 months.
- Offline workshops and trainings.

Providers consider mentoring and peer learning to be the most effective formats. Their advantage lies in their high adaptability to the specifics of an organization, its challenges, and working conditions. In addition, these formats foster a deeper understanding of how to effectively integrate new knowledge and approaches into the daily operations of NGOs.

A comparison of preferences concerning training formats between providers and service recipients shows partial inconsistency. NGOs predominantly prefer trainings (59%), while interest in mentoring and peer learning is considerably lower (34% and 23%, respectively). However, donors share the organizations' view that in-person events are generally more effective.

8.3. Additional support after trainings are held

Donors have a clear understanding of knowledge alone being insufficient to strengthen NGO capacity. Therefore, they actively complement the educational component with other forms of support, such as:

1.

Financial tools for development. Small grants are common for organizational development, as well as flexible funding to satisfy institutional needs.

2.

Diagnostics and support. External assessment of an organization's capacity (including audits of documents and processes) with detailed feedback and recommendations.

3.

Mental support. Free individual/group counseling sessions, psychological support hotlines, retreats, etc.

4.

Institutional support for basic capacity. Salaries for key staff members (e.g., head, accountant), coverage of office expenses, and technical/IT solutions (websites, communication systems).

5.

In-kind and material support. Procurement and provision of equipment/resources according to NGOs' requests; in humanitarian areas, implementation of duty-of-care policies (insurance, promotion of safety standards).

6.

Standards, policies, and tools.

Development and dissemination of instructions and templates for basic policies (with a focus on implementation), practical guides.

7.

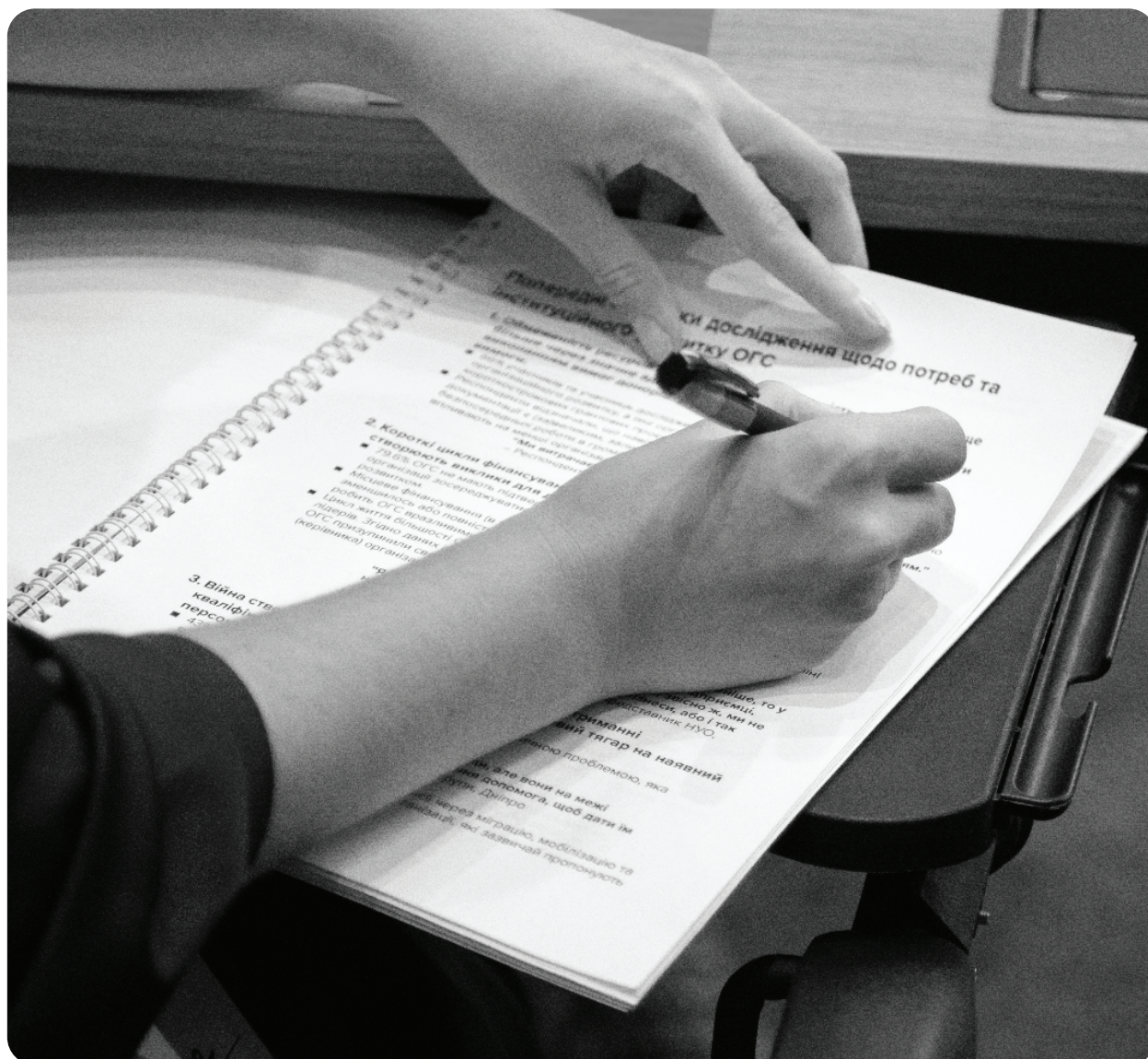
Informational support. Informing organizations about opportunities, including niche ones not advertised on major platforms.

8.

Networking and access to stakeholders.

Providing event spaces, organizational support for meetings, translation services where possible, invitations to closed strategic gatherings (including with donors/the UN), creating partnership opportunities.

Periodically, donors combine educational opportunities with financial support. This attests to their understanding that, without additional resources, organizations find it difficult to apply acquired knowledge and strengthen their capacity, which is a point repeatedly emphasized by civil society and charitable organizations.



THE ORGANIZATIONS OF PROCESS AND FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

CHAPTER 9

9.1. The main difficulties in organizing trainings for NGOs

Providers of educational initiatives deploy a different approach to assessing the difficulty of organizing training for NGOs in Ukraine. Some report no challenges at all, while others point to certain obstacles they have to handle, both in terms of organizing the process and in engaging training participants.

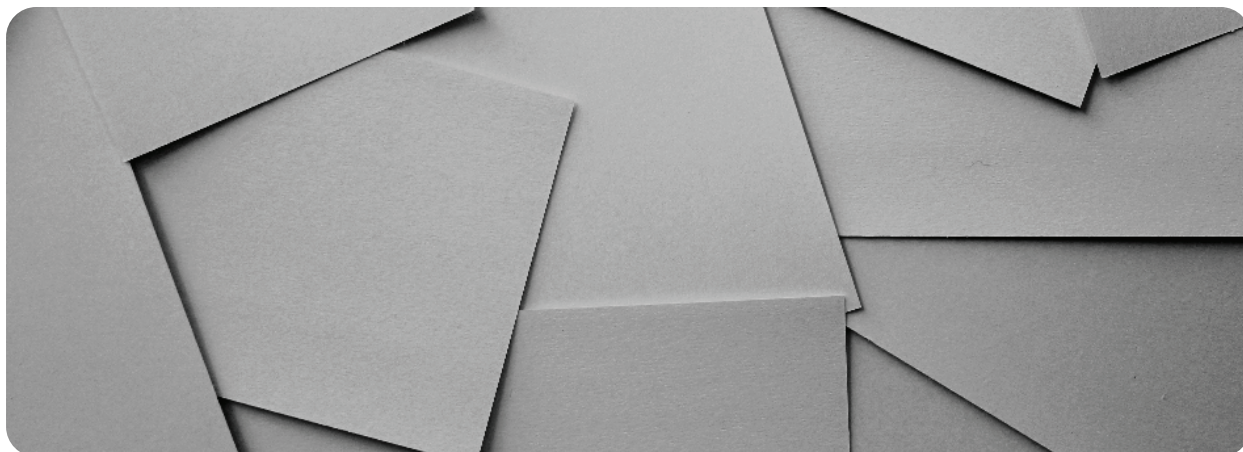
In particular, when organizing training, providers sometimes face difficulties such as:

- **Finding speakers for certain specialized, niche topics.**
- **Selecting materials and training content** that would be relevant for organizations with different levels of development and areas of work.
- **Planning training in advance** (necessary because of the bureaucratic procedures in NGOs. This is especially true for large, international organizations).
- **Taking into account security aspects** (availability of shelters, risk of shelling), when organizing in-person meetings.

When recruiting participants for free training, donor organizations at times are faced with the following challenges:

- **Lack of interest** taken by NGOs in new (little-known, non-trending) **topics** (e.g., capacity assessment).
- **Prevalence of “training tourism”** (with participants joining trainings without genuine interest in the topic, demonstrating little engagement in the learning process).
- **Participant turnover** (difficulty keeping participants engaged until the end of the training).
- **Pronounced seasonality** (recruiting participants is particularly challenging during vacation periods).

This list of challenges indicates that the **main problem lies not so much in attracting participants to training, but rather in forming a group of motivated learners.** Participant engagement is to a considerable extent lower during online training sessions.



9.2. Assessment of effectiveness and usefulness of trainings from donors

The survey has shown that training providers possess a good understanding of the factors that guide NGOs in choosing educational initiatives. They observe higher levels of organizational interest in events that:

- are moderated by strong speakers and renowned experts;
- are conducted offline (including travel with expense coverage, accommodation, and meals);
- offer extended networking opportunities with prominent institutions and partners, as well as well-known lecturers;
- imply mentorship;
- are accompanied by grant support (mentioned once).

According to providers, the main barriers to participation are high training costs and lack of time (inconvenient schedule).

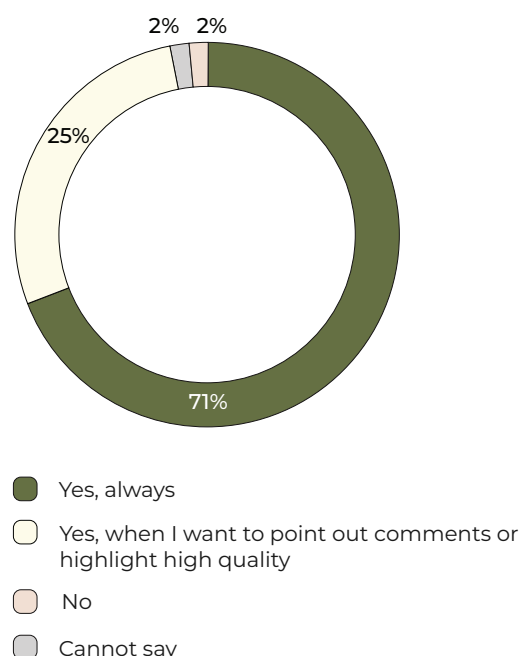
These assessments are largely consistent with the criteria identified by NGOs. However, rarely do donors link NGOs' interest in the trainings they organize to project funding or institutional development grants. For NGOs, this factor is actually the main incentive for participating in trainings.

The survey of NGOs has revealed that the **feedback mechanisms generally allow for the collection of representative and valid information about satisfaction with the training**. Representativeness is ensured by the high proportion of organizations willing to provide feedback (96%), and validity is supported by the high level of honesty in responses (84% report always being honest) (Diagram 37).

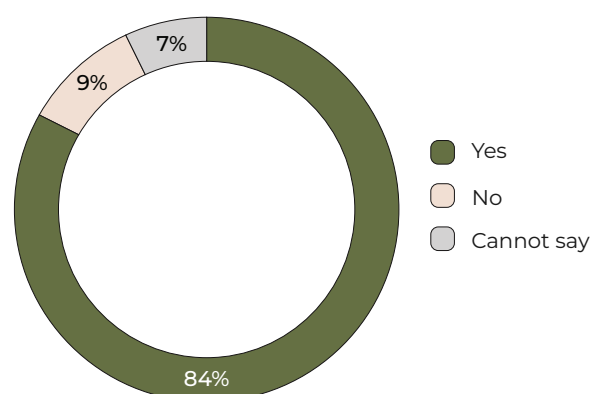
At the same time, it is worth keeping in mind that, at least every 10th feedback is not honest (sometimes this can be explained by the willingness to support the efforts put in by organizers/lecturers, sometimes — in view of the fear of spoiling relationships with donors or lose access to a number of opportunities).

Diagram 37

Do you offer feedback after attending training?



If yes, do you always have an opportunity to provide honest feedback? (N=191)



Some of the donors are intent on bringing in an independent organization (third party) to receive feedback so that NGOs feel more protected in case of providing negative feedback.

Such focus on the forms of feedback is important in view of an opportunity to receive constructive pieces of advice on how to improve the quality of educational products. Thanks to an analysis of this information, providers' staff have introduced on many occasions the following:

- Expanding the range of available trainings or subtopics within the existing courses, altering the format of material delivery, or adjusting the duration of individual modules.
- Replacing lecturers/coaches (in case of widespread or repeated negative feedback).
- Changing the timing or location of events.

At the same time, donors aim to assess the effectiveness of their training programs based on objective criteria related to the development of NGO capacity. In order to achieve this, they use the following tools:

- Keeping track of organizational progress by analyzing its activities and the level of engagement (including that on social media).
- Assessing knowledge acquisition, for example, by conducting exit interviews.
- Observing the implementation of projects to the stage of their completion.
- Analyzing the development and cohesion of the team over time.

As a result, donors observe the impact of their programs exerted on strengthening NGO capacity. However, they also note that the effects of training can materialize with varying time lags. For instance, **technical topics (financial management, policy development) are rather translated into practical changes more quickly, whereas “soft” skills require a longer-term horizon.**



METHODOLOGY

The goal and objectives of the survey

The goal: to examine the format, content, and impact of training and development initiatives aimed to strengthen the capacity of Ukrainian civil society organizations in 2024–2025, taking into consideration the perspectives of participants, implementers, and donors.

Objectives of the survey:

- Map and analyze the available offers (key media covering the non-profit sector, Telegram channels, Facebook pages of service providers).
- Describe the approaches adopted by national organizations and donors that arrange training opportunities (both open trainings and those organized by donors for their partners): including strategy, training topics and formats, process organization, and follow-up support.
- Present the views of participants on activities aimed at building capacity: accessibility and choice of activities, participation experience and assessment of effectiveness, practical application and impact, as well as needs and feedback.
- Develop recommendations for various stakeholders, when planning and implementing programs to enhance the capacity of Ukrainian CSOs, aimed to prevent inefficient use of resources in institutional capacity development and increase the strategic value of such investments.

The survey's methodology included 3 components:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| Content analysis. | Qualitative research: expert interviews with training providers and consumers of capacity-building educational opportunities. | Quantitative research: survey of NGOs that have participated in capacity-building trainings over the past few years. |

Content analysis

It entailed mapping and analyzing the offers on websites, Telegram channels, and Facebook pages that publish information about available opportunities, namely: Curly Management Bureau, FUNdraiser, NGO Resource Center, Philanthropy in Ukraine, Alliance of Ukrainian CSOs, Grants and Opportunities, Hromadskiy Prostir, Gurt, ISAR Ednannia, Kyiv School of Public Administration (KSPU), Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), My City, Renaissance Foundation, Council of Europe, Ukrainian Volunteer Service, UCU, and UCU School of Holistic Development.

Sample: 100% of posts for the period from February 1, 2025, to July 31, 2025.

Qualitative research

Sample:

8 providers organizing training opportunities (4 international and 4 Ukrainian).

12 NGOs that have participated in capacity-building trainings over the past year:

	National	Local
Public organizations	3	3
Charitable organizations	3	3

The organizations were selected based on the principle of maximum differentiation in terms of their specialization, participation in training activities and length of existence.

Method: Online/telephone interviews.

Interview duration: 60 min.

Research period: September 10 – September 30, 2025

Quantitative stage of the research

Sample: 200 NGOs that have participated in the trainings on the development of institutional capacity

Margin of error — 6%.

The method of the research:

15% — online survey (link distributed via social media)

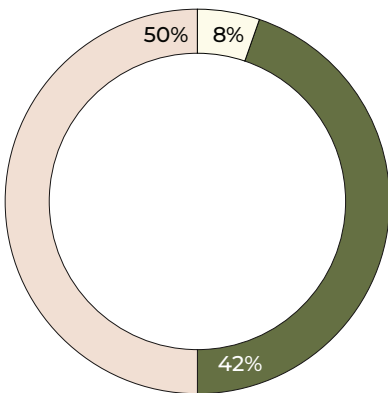
85% — telephone survey

Research period: September 20 – October 7, 2025.

THE PROFILES OF ORGANIZATIONS SURVEYED

Diagram 38

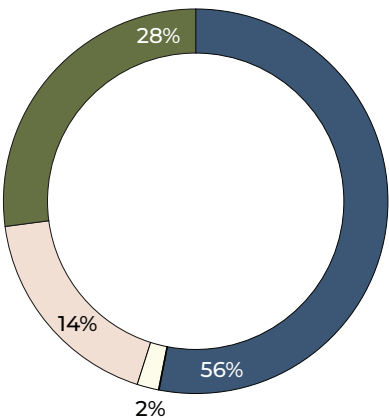
What type does your organization belong to?



- International
- National
- Regional

Diagram 39

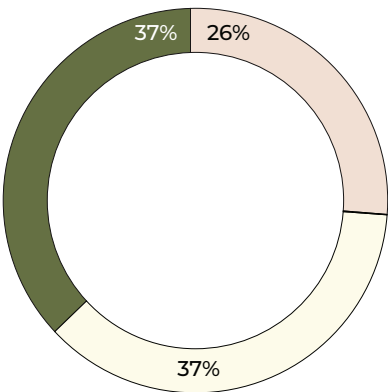
Where are the headquarters of your organization located?



- Kyiv
- Province center
- Other city
- Village

Diagram 40

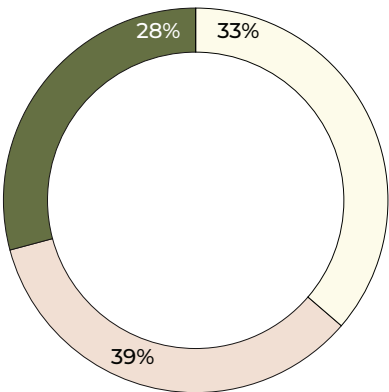
Length of time the organization has been operating



- Newly-founded (2022-2025 p)
- Active for 5-10 years
- Active for over 10 years

Diagram 41

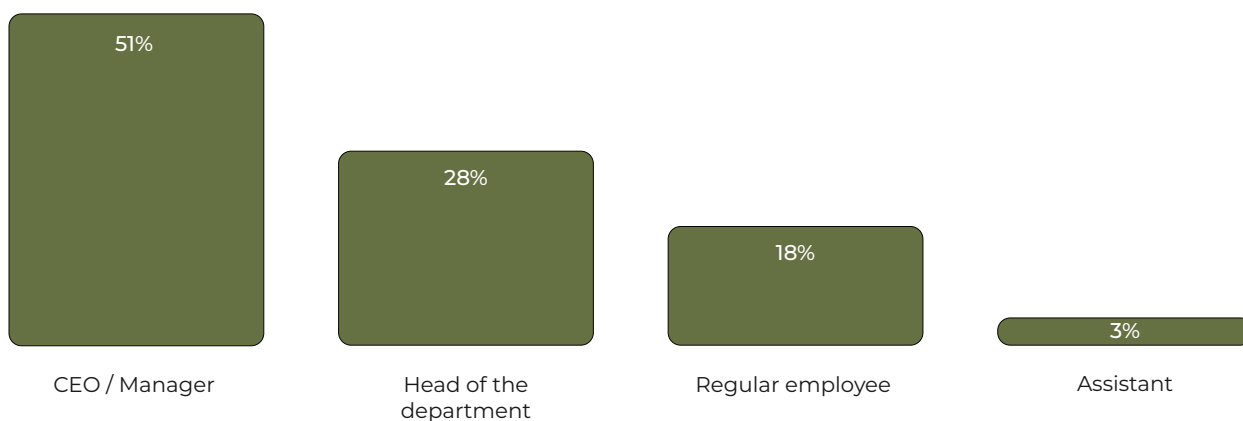
Indicate the size of your organization



- Small (up to 10 employees)
- Medium (11-50 employees)
- Large (51+ employees)

Diagram 42

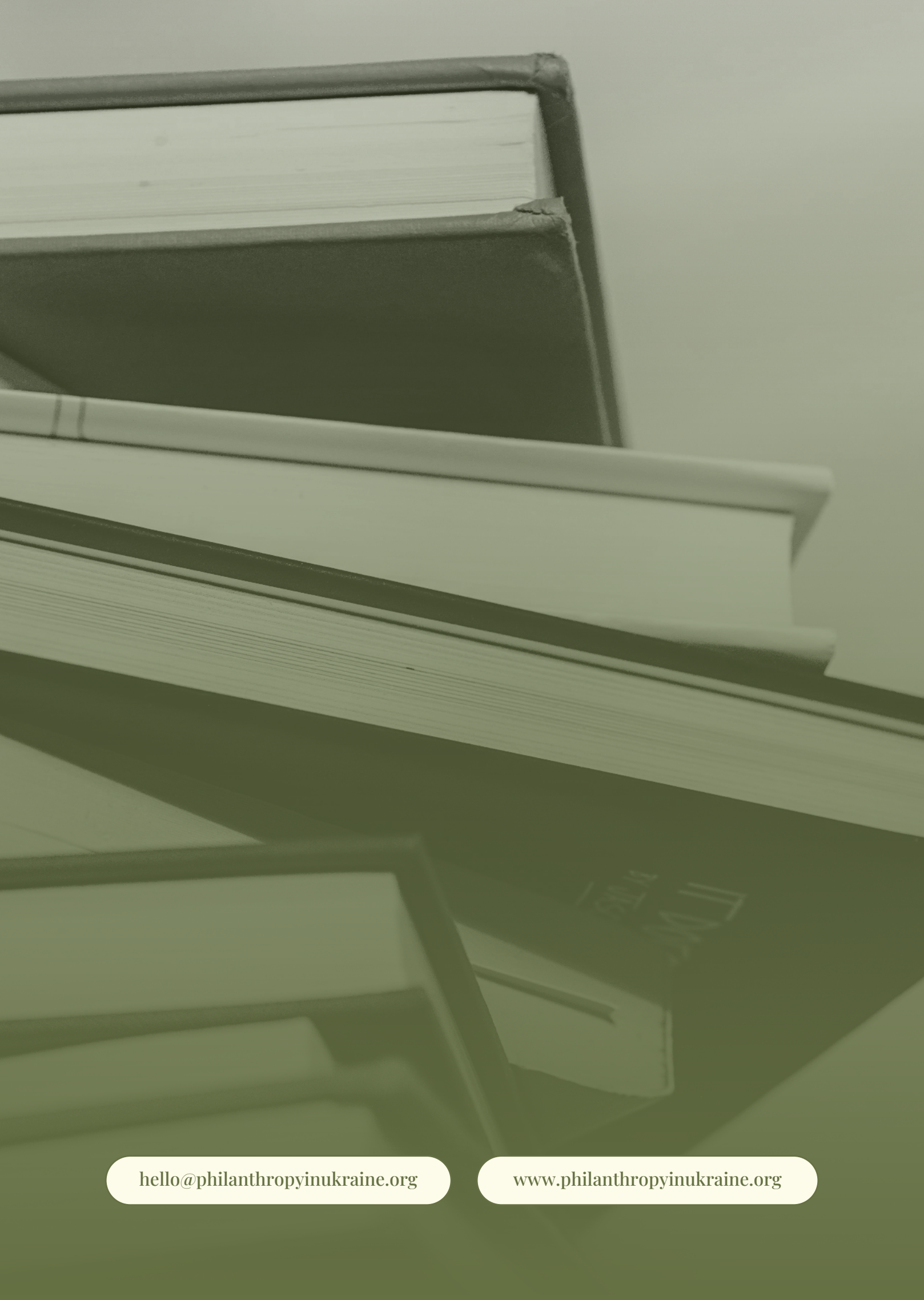
What is your position in the public organization?



Діаграма 43

What is the primary area activity of your NGO?





hello@philanthropyinukraine.org

www.philanthropyinukraine.org