PHILANTHROPY IN UKRAINE

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS FACED BY THE UKRAINIAN NON-PROFIT SECTOR

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in 2022 posed an unprecedented challenge to Ukrainian society and its institutions. The public sector was no exception.

Charitable and public organizations faced the unheard-of scope of problems. However, they became among the first to cover humanitarian and safety needs faced by citizens as well as help the army. In extraordinarily difficult circumstances they managed to direct enormous mobilization potential of the population in a constructive direction by coordinating volunteers and financial flows. They quickly established the distribution of international aid. Today the public and charitable sectors constitute not only a crisis and humanitarian response, but they also participate in Ukraine's development and recovery.

However, one has to bear in mind that the sector itself has also been impacted by the war. Its organizations have encountered challenges that require support and aid. It is this aspect that is not sufficiently addressed in Ukraine.

It is for this reason that Philanthropy of Ukraine has initiated research on the influence exerted by the war on CSOs, their needs and problems. Another goal of the research was to gather best practices that would help organizations to keep afloat and develop amid uncertainty, new challenges and rapid change.

This research was conducted through expert interviews, being based on the experience of 20 organizations (in particular, 10 organizations form the public sector and 10 from the charitable one). One half of our both male and female experts represented teams at the national level, with the other one representing the regional level. Organizations were selected in view of their specializations (we adhered to the principle of maximal differentiation). The research was carried out in July 2024 by the team of the sociological center Socioinform.

THE STATE OF ORGANIZATIONS AMID WAR: CHALLENGES AND TRENDS

1.1 Changes after the full–fledged invasion

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine has considerably strengthened the public and charitable sectors. Able organizations have stepped up their activities, attempting to engage more human and financial resources as well as scaling up these activities. This change, on the one hand, has become a response to unprecedented challenges that arose before the state and society, and on the other hand, it has become possible thanks to the aid from world community and mobilization of Ukrainians.

A detailed analysis of change in the public sector following the full-scale invasion enables one to highlight such tendencies that are inherent in the majority of organizations:

- Extension of spheres, direction of activities and scaling up of projects.

- Growing budgets (project and institutional ones). Some organizations mentioned that their budgets grew by 3-10 times.

- Reaching the national level or extending the geography of activities.

- Activating cooperation with international foundations and donor organizations, simplification of attracting funds from donors.

- Strengthening institutional development and growing organizational structure.

All these processes are closely interrelated. For instance, the extension of directions of activities / scaling up of projects have become a catalyst of structural growth of organizations, since without well-established processes and a high level of management it is impossible to quickly adapt to changes and live up to ever increasing expectations of donors and partners. Reaching the national level has enhanced the 'visibility' of organizations for donors, also increasing their capabilities for attracting funds, development and sustainable activities. Activating cooperation with international donors has impelled Ukrainian organizations to augment their institutional culture in accordance with the requirements of transparency and accountability regarding the use of funds, which has also contributed to their institutional development.

As a result we see larger, more powerful and institutionally developed public and charitable organizations in Ukraine.

« *After four years we have managed to establish a kind of a whole system, achieve systematic work. In other words. We have evolved from an organization that comprised a few people and had no clear structure. We now have well-paid positions, a clear structure of the organization. Our capabilities have substantially grown, as has the scope of our activities.* »

Regional PO

Some specific changes have touched organizations that worked/had offices in occupied regions (in the South and East) or close to the line of contact. They were forced to close down some of the offices and relocate teams to safer regions.

Oftentimes they lost parts of their team. In some cases they had to search for ways of effective integration of relocated staff to the existing offices elsewhere (it is especially true for youth organizations). Members of the relocated offices often feel certain 'vulnerability and uncertainty'. Therefore, a need for solutions and politicians arises that would serve the interests of both the relocated and receiving offices.

« *About two tens of offices were forced to fully cease operations due to both the threat of shelling and our ideological component and possible persecution because of our views. We also have changed because within our organization we had to look for a new approach to the relocated members of organizations who relocated to those offices that had been functioning for a long time.* »

National PO

At the same time, some regional organizations say that today the dynamics of organizational growth has gradually slackened its pace. The main factors of this process are outflow of personnel, reduced funding, cuts in projects of crisis response, while going back to the original field of activities).

1.2 Internal and external factors of influence on the activities of CSOs (SWOT analysis)

Today, public and charitable organizations in Ukraine are influenced by various factors that promote or prevent their full-fledged activities and development. Some of these factors are external regarding these organizations (opportunities and threats), whereas others are internal (strengths and weaknesses). Schematically they can be shown as follows (see table 1).

	POSITIVE FACTORS	NEGATIVE FACTORS

POSITIVE FACTORS

NEGATIVE FACTORS

EXTERNAL

OPPORTUNITIES:

+ Cohesion, cooperation and coordination of organizations from the public sector.

+ Closer cooperation with international organizations and donors, larger amount of funds for projects.

+ Establishing a deeper cooperation with the diaspora (selected by few respondents).

+ Openness to cooperation with the representatives of authorities.

THREATS:

— Security risks and uncertainty.

— Non-committed employees in the sector.

— Fewer charitable donations from citizens.

— International organizations poaching staff.

— Lack of social capital.

— Fiercer competition for resources. Rigid state regulation.

— The requirement to conduct audit and monitoring of funds attracted from donors.

— Insufficient flexibility of donors in their work with Ukraine.

— Regular power outages.

INTERNAL

STRENGTHS:

+ Revitalization of fundraising activities and work with donors.

+ Increasing scope of projects.

+ Larger budget for organizational development.

+ Rapid development of organizational structure.

+ Higher quality of the team (support, common vision).

+ Active networking and cooperation.

WEAKNESSES:

— Staff shortage (employees, narrow-profile experts). High staff turnover.

— Fatigue, exhaustion, burnout of employees.

— Lack of organizational potential and experience against a backdrop of quick growth.

— Outdated internal organizational rules and terms.

— Shortages of resources for institutional development.

Below we have detailed factors that impact on the activities of public and charitable organizations.

Opportunities (positive external factors)

+ **Growth of cohesion and strengthening coordination of the public sector** — one of the most positive factors that enhance the capabilities of CSOs. Following the full-fledged invasion organizations have begun cooperating more actively by building coalitions, uniting in networks for common work on large projects requiring a complex approach.

« *There is more coordination within the sector as before 2022 there had been a lot of clusterization. Now we are witnessing a transition to cooperation within the sector.* »

National PO

+ **Cooperation with large international organizations and donors.** First, this secures significant funds for the implementation of projects. Second, it promotes the development of institutional capabilities of public and charitable organizations (increasing professional capacity of employees, improving managerial processes and enhancing organizational structure). This, in turn, is happening thanks to both sustainable funds for organizational expenses and to the creation of institutional culture (thanks to the spread of policies, standards of work etc.).

« *By giving funds, donors taught us before how to grow. Even large businesses do not have all the policies, procedures, approvals or IRP, unlike public organizations. Donors give money but they, like investors, want to see how (transparently and as intended) this money is going to be spent. We grew cyclically. We improved. And then we applied for more substantial funds. We grew and improved again and again.* »

National PO

+ **Closer cooperation with the diaspora** has become an important source of resources (funds, material aid, expertise) for many organizations, especially in the circumstances of growing needs and limited internal resources.

+ **Increasing openness from authorities to cooperation** has been registered both at the national and local levels. State authorities more actively engage public organizations in the decision- and policy-making process amid war. Local authorities eagerly cooperate to implement projects, at times co-financing this implementation.

« *Before we mainly worked with informal education and the public sector. After the full-scale invasion we began to interact more with the government sector. The government sector began to cooperate at the beginning of the full-scale invasion, albeit in a forced manner.* »

National PO

Threats
(negative external factors)

— **Security risks and uncertainty** are a relevant factor for organizations working in settlements located close to the zone of hostilities. First, the security risks run by employees and beneficiaries are in question. Second, given the frontline that is constantly moving, it becomes increasingly difficult to plan out projects and search for donors.

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We concentrate the bigger part of our activities along the frontline or in the cities that are located the closest to the hostility zone. Thus we are constantly unable to predict things or do long-term planning.

National CO

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Third, some organizations were forced to relocate and organize work in a new place (sometimes there were several relocations).

— **Lack of social capital and trust of the population in the public sector** is derived from society not comprehending the principles of work of charitable foundations. Some people believe that the latter profit from raised funds, while others do not trust funds due to major scandals that have happened in the past. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that some organizations are funded for monetary purposes, which ruins trust of the population and donors, as well as undermines the potential of fundraising (this is especially true for foundations that help the military and that cannot count on the support from international organizations).

« *The problem lies in unsystematic work of the public sector and the establishing of the culture of charity in which the population does not see the public sector as such, with the latter working on changes in the country. One of the factors that prevents us working is actually the incorrectly established brand of the public sector. It hinders external benefactors and donors from trusting charitable foundations in principle.* »

National PO

After the full-fledged invasion the number of stereotypes regarding volunteer work has decreased as these activities have become more widespread and noticeable. However, some of the stereotypes are still being repeated, having kept their pace. Time and effort are required to overcome them. Also, distrust grows stronger in the cases of misuse of funds raised, non-transparent reporting and the number of scandals involving particular volunteers and volunteer organizations.

— **Decreasing financial support** from the population and donors compared to the period starting from the beginning of the war happens due to depleted resources of the populations and general fatigue. Organizations are forced to optimize their expenses, reduce the number of programs and projects, search for new sources of funds against a backdrop of growing competition.

« *At the beginning of the war any volunteer activity could have raised a million. With such enthusiasm people were donating not only for the army, but also to support civilians. Now this support is on the wane.* »

National PO

« *It has become more difficult to attract resources. It was easier before. Before these were mainly Ukrainian benefactors, whereas now we are predominantly trying to attract resources from abroad, which is challenging.* »

Regional PO

— **Headhunting (poaching) of personnel by non-resident** is one of the sorest factors that impact on the activities of Ukrainian organizations. A significant difference is in the remuneration, better opportunities for career development, the right to reserve employees liable for military service helps international organizations poach the most qualified specialists. As a result, the capability of local CSO for effective implementation of projects decreases.

« *A lot of non-resident organizations began operating. There is a 15-time gap in salaries for top-experts. Let's say a PM can make 4000 EUR working there. I can't offer them that much here. And this is a major challenge. I've got donors that give us money and they poach my people.* »

National PO

« *ig donors enter the market and they poach people from the public sector. I don't blame them for landing well-paid jobs. However, on the other hand, donors are also interested in implementing projects with partners. I am not sure if there remains anyone who will realize these projects (the ones that colleagues want to realize), should this tendency hold.* »

National PO

New non-committed employees in the sector. A rapid growth of the number of jobs and salaries in the non-profit sector has led to it being filled with personnel that are solely driven by financial stimuli. These people often do not share ideas and values of non-profit organizations and volunteer movement, and therefore cannot be really effective.

« *Prior to the full-scale invasion the non-profit sector was full of people who knew why there wanted to work there and who understood their mission and goal. Currently, the market has expanded, with lots of people transferring from the business sector because of high salaries. It's more difficult to work with these people since they have no internal motivation to work in the non-profit center.* »

National PO

More intense competition for limited resources is caused by a great many new organizations (often due to disintegrating teams from larger PO). This results in the situation when the search for funds takes more time than the implementation of projects.

The requirement from donors to conduct audit and financial monitoring can place a considerable financial burden on organizations in view of its volume (500-700 thousand UAH (12-16,5 thousand USD - translator's note)). The same goes for the development of financial policies for a PO, which can be requiried from donors (300 thousand UAH - (7 thousand USD - translato's note)).

Insufficient flexibility of donors can take on various forms. Most often it is about the lack of understanding of the local context, mentality and the needs of the population coupled with excessive bureaucratization that becomes destructive amid a rapidly changing situation in regions close to the front.

— **Rigid regulation of activities from the government.** State authorities that were glad to receive any support at first, have become to more actively interfere in the work of the public and charitable sectors. **Strict regulation and requirements for reporting have been introduced, which has complicated and decelerated the work of organizations.**

« *In the first year we enjoyed full freedom and trust since the government could not keep up and set the rules of the game, whereas now it is tightening the screws and we have to spend much more time completing these bureaucratic, red-tape processes.* »

Regional PO

— **Power outages** render the implementation of projects more difficult, disrupting organizational processes and depleting resources that have to be spent on equipment for storing energy (this factor was mentioned by one respondent).

Strengths (internal factors that strengthen organizations)

+ **Revitalization of fundraising activities.** Public and charitable organization s search for funds in a more confident manner, contacting donors, citizens and the business sector. They establish new partnerships and look for new formats of interaction.

Increasing scope of projects. Most organizations have begun their work implementing projects on larger scale (in terms of funds, geographical coverage and complexity) than before the full-fledged invasion. This has helped burnish the image of organizations and loyalty to the brand, as well as build institutional capacity and expertise.

Larger budget for organizational development has helped expand teams, build processes and allocate time to not only project activities, but also to the development of one's own organization.

Development of organizational structure and introduction of systematic business processes have been revitalized in a significant number of national and local organizations throughout the sector.

> *For the first time of the existence of our organization we have managed to establish structural and systematic business processes. We continue to follow this path. This is something that keeps us together and prevents us from plunging into a total chaos where there are many things to deal with.*
>
> Regional PO

The quality of teams has been enhanced. The level of cohesion and mutual support has significantly grown, as well as coalescing around a common vision and enhancing one's adaptation to change.

Active networking and cooperation of CSOs, development of horizontal networks and strengthening of social capital are key elements that contribute to the organization's resilience, enhance its effectiveness and enable it to better respond to challenges. Organizations also mention stronger partnerships within the sector, pointing out the opportunity to receive support (in terms of information, organization and participation, etc.) from colleagues.

Weaknesses (internal factors that inhibit development of organizations)

— **Staff shortage** and high staff turnover have posed a major challenge to many public organizations and charitable foundations in the wake of the full-fledged invasion. The reasons for this are various: rapid growth of organizations and the number of projects, military draft, burnout of volunteers that joined the sector on the wave of enthusiasm in the first months of the invasion, as well as low salaries at Ukrainian CSOs. As a result, organizations are limited in their growth, with their employees inundated with duties. A partial solution to this problem could be the training of their own experts from among the youths. However, this requires much time and a lot of effort.

« *Due to staff shortages we cannot scale up our coverage or expand our programs. We have hit the ceiling of people having their physical limits.* »

Regional PO

« *We face the problem of staff shortage since people often relocate in for their different personal and security reasons. This rotation is constant. Prior to the full-scale war we did not have such a big staff turnover.* »

Regional PO

A separate problem in this context lies in the shortage of narrow-profile staff. There are no educational programs in Ukraine that would train specialists in the field of humanitarian crisis management.

Amid staff shortage the representatives of CSOs see training as an important element of the development of an organization. Nonetheless, they do not possess sufficient resources to invest in their employees. This leads to these employees not always fulfilling their duties effectively, especially in the context of rapid change and new challenges.

« *To modernize training we also need money, or people and expertise. And this is not happening or happening in a very limited fashion. We do everything on our own, very slowly, which means things are being delayed. We've got volunteers and children waiting. We are not able to process applications of those willing to join our organization.* »

National PO

— **Exhaustion and burnout** of staff. Uncertainty, work amid constant danger (shelling, power outages), mental burden, stress caused by the war and often too many duties result in general fatigue and burnout of staff.

« *There are few opportunities for mental rest or for a break to keep one's mental health in order. Often people who take up a lot of work soon burn out and leave off fulfilling their duties for some time or altogether. As far as I am concerned, this is true not only for our organization, but also for many other ones.* »

National PO

— **Lack of organizational potential and experience.** Lack of knowledge. Amid quick emergence of organizations following the beginning of the war this problem remains relevant both for national and local teams.

« *I am looking for advice externally in order to establish processes as we are now acutely experiencing this problem, I mean financially arranging this humanitarian aid.* »

National PO

« *The amount of money and expertise that need to be attracted has grown. Consequently, we need some experience and skills that we acquire on the fly.* »

National PO

— **Outdated internal organizational rules and terms,** which are ineffective in the modern context, are relevant for particular large organizations with a long record of existence. The larger and older an organization, the more difficult it is to reform it globally.

To sum up the analysis of negative factors that impact the public sector, one **can notice that the majority of them are queally painful both for regional (local) and all-national organizations.** Here we are talking about staff shortage and burnout of employees, decreasing levels of financial support from international donors and citizens, pressure exerted by state controlling institutions, uncertainty and economic instability.

However, **certain difficulties and problems mostly concern regional organizations.** For example, they more often encounter shortage of financial resources. First, they find it difficult to compete with large foundations for donors' attention and money.

Second, before the war local CSOs (which are mostly oriented towards receiving aid from their local community) were mainly attracting resources from local businesses. However, this source of financing has considerably shrunk due to economic instability. Apart from this, this 'territory' of regional organizations can frequently be intruded into by international organizations. They feel the lack of expertise more acutely.

> While large CSOs attempt to keep the dynamics of organizational growth through strategic planning and thanks to aid from international donors, their regional counterparts are mainly concentrated on rising to challenges and maintaining their status quo.

A separate category comprises those **CSOs and CF that have grown in terms of their organization and finances,** having even achieved a breakthrough from the regional to national level in the wake of the full-scale invasion. They have faced the **'disease of rapid growth', i.e. the lack of organizational potential and managerial experience.** On the one hand, it is easier for these organizations to find funds thanks to their visibility in public space, on the other hand, the aforementioned problems (staff shortage, lack of managerial experience) hinder the realization of new projects.

At first glance, the list of negative factors that influence organizations today is much longer than that of positive ones. **However, this does not mean that problems exceed opportunities. An analysis of changes that have occurred in the past year within the majority of the organizations that participated in the survey will show that these changes have mainly been positive or neutral.**

Charitable and public organizations have shifted focus of their activities from humanitarian projects and crisis response (building shelters, providing humanitarian aid, organizing mental support, solving issues with water supply, etc.) to the work they used to do before the invasion and strategic long-term planning.

> « *In the first year of the war we normally dealt with charitable aid and crisis response. Now, though, we rather follow the path of long-term and strategic solutions as well as doing projects.* »
>
> Regional PO

More attention is now dedicated to internal processes, resources and to establishing long-term partnerships.

> « *We have terminated our activities of active humanitarian response, widening our horizon of planning. We have begun thinking about some sustainability, the search for internal resources, about certain internal processes and long-term partnerships.* »
>
> National CO

> « *In 2023 we restored our training programs, as well as partnership regarding the reform of digitalization and the provision of the service of resilience.* »
>
> National PO

The development of the organizational structure and improvement of communications within an organization and externally have become important elements of resilience and efficiency of CSOs in cruises circumstances of war. The establishment of a stable organizational structure has allowed securing effective management, whilst the establishment of communications has promoted coordinated work of teams and improvement of their productivity.

Thus, the activities of organizations become less urgent and more planned. Organizations are strengthening their organizational capacity and establishing partnerships. **Therefore, negative factors are only challenges encountered by the public and charitable sectors. However, they are responding to them with flying colors.**

1.3 The needs of the public sector amid war

The rapid growth of the number of public and charitable organizations, the scope of their activities and spheres of responsibility require a larger amount of resources in terms of funds, material, personnel, etc. It goes without saying that each organization has its own needs.

> Nevertheless, as of today the most acute problem faced by the public sector is staff shortage and lack of funds. In fact, these two problems are intertwined. Oftentimes financial resources do not suffice to engage the needed experts. Staff shortage, for its part, inhibits the development of an organization and its abilities to attract necessary funds and carry out projects.

The main need is people. To find these people,
we still need anyway.

National CO

This is true. **In terms of finance, public and charitable organizations mainly lack resources to cover administrative and operational expenses,** and first of all, competitive salaries and motivation for their teams. Low salaries/lack of remuneration lead to the depletion of human resources from the sector (caused by fatigue, burnout, lack of motivation, etc.) and the inability to engage highly-skilled employees.

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Many public organizations function as volunteer ones,
without receiving anything for these activities at all, which
prevents development. Their employees cannot live without
money. Consequently, they start working elsewhere, not
having time for public–volunteer activities.

Local PO

At the same time, organizations of the public sector often lack funds to rent and secure the functioning of their offices, to acquire software or services from the commercial sector (e.g., IT specialists, lawyers, etc.). Such a situation is caused by the fact that donors are mostly ready to fund concrete projects, without letting administrative expenses be included in the budget.

Organizations that attract funds thanks to fundraising, encounter the lack of funds to implement projects. This problem is especially acutely experienced by the organizations that help the military as they cannot count on support from international organizations and donors.

The problem of **staff shortage** in the sector is extremely acute. The majority of heads of organizations mentioned that they lack people effectively at all levels, from volunteers to administrators. The reasons for this lie in the labor shortage in the country, lack/low level of expertise of specialists in specific fields, and uncompetitive salary.

Most often public and charitable organizations need:

○ Financial managers/accountants.

○ Program and project managers.

○ Project managers with a high level of competence.

○ Communication specialists, marketing and CMM specialists.

○ Fundraisers.

○ Volunteers.

○ Experts in provision of social services (e.g., psychologists, social workers, pedagogues).

》 *The biggest problem is communications, marketing, CMM and PR. There is a dearth of good experts in Ukraine in this regard. Not always can civil society hire personnel of such a level and to offer the salary they want. Second, these are strong project managers that can work on their own. Third, (although this point is not as urgent as the previous ones), these are project managers that could fully handle this or that project or department on a turnkey basis and build or continue developing from scratch something that has already been achieved.*

Local PO

To cope with the aforementioned challenges non-government and charitable organizations require diverse support: financial, educational, informational and mental.

Financial support is, first of all, needed in the form of grants for institutional development. This will help bring in and keep the staff, optimize processes, thus enhancing the efficiency of the sector's work.

Relevant problems in funding are:

○ Covering administrative and operational expenses окриття: salaries for team members, rent and maintenance of offices (the most pressing need).

○ Acquisition of software (e.g., CRM systems with a high level of protection from cyber attacks and data leakage, systems for business analytics).

« *Organizations mostly see the fact that this software is not free as a problem. They can't afford it, with CRM systems becoming increasingly simplified.* »

National CO

○ Covering expenses on IT support and development of websites.

○ Developing policies.

○ Conducting audits.

○ Developing networks of partner organizations in regions (funds for subgrants) to have an opportunity to quickly implement large-scale projects.

○ Ensuring operations of organizations in the face of an energy crisis: purchasing power generators, EcoFlows, Starlink terminals (mentioned by one respondent).

○ Purchasing equipment and implements (e.g., a car or equipment to conduct training).

It is important that financial support be sustainable (lasting more than a year). This will offer an opportunity for organizations to plan their activities, guarantee work for personnel and concentrate effort on realizing projects and not spreading themselves too thin on constant search for resources to keep the team together.

Training support is one of the most relevant needs faced by the public sector. Today, organizations are forced to spend a significant amount of time, money and effort on developing and training their staff. Sustainable and systematic aid in this process will substantially alleviate the burden on the administration of CSOs.

« *Of all the needs I would put the need for training on top instead of funding. We really face the challenge of upgrading one;s skills. Standards constantly change, new things emerge. We really lack this.* »

National CO

« *For the market [of experts in the charitable sector] to emerge, they are to be offered good educational materials and training. Sustainable approach is required, a sustainable platform for preparation, so that you can choose from the experts that apply to you rather than employ anyone who is work-conscious and has more or less normal values, and so that you don't tell them something like 'Okay, we will teach you.* »

Локальна БО

In general, the training program could contribute to solving two tasks at a time. First, it could enhance the effectiveness of processes at organizations in the charitable and public sector.

« *We have noticed that people can perform certain functions for years on end, but as soon as their educational level increases, they will spend half as much time on carrying out these functions. And [thanks to this] they can do some other things.* »

Local CO

Second, this means mitigating the personnel crisis in the sector by increasing the number of specialists on the market. Representatives of small local organizations are especially interested in training support since large organizations have institutional culture (passing on of knowledge), an established staff training system, resources to pay necessary educational courses or bring in external expertise, the experience of networking with a view to passing on experience. While the heads of small organizations very rarely learned management, performing diverse functions (for example, creating websites on their own or preparing communications campaigns) and not possessing resources to cover training programs for staff. At the same time, large organizations do not always have the opportunity to spend resources on individual learning or monitoring leading world practices in the public sector.

Relevant directions for training support:

○ Management: organizational development, business processes of organizations, financial accounting and management, strategy planning.

○ Attracting funds and sales: expertise in fundraising, crowdfunding, work with endowment grants, marketing.

- Special theme-based training according to areas of work/topics of a project. Capacity building of staff (e.g., psychologists, social workers).

- Leading practices of organizations in the public sector.

- Usage of artificial intelligence.

- IT skills (for example, to create and maintain organization's website).

Among necessary formats of training support there are: mentoring, individual coaching sessions, supervision, capacity building courses. There is also a need for grants to obtain European certificates Caregivers, as well as localization and translation of materials for European training and programs.

It is of importance that training support be professional and useful as today the market is full of programs offering insufficient level of expertise.

« *Training is to be conducted by highly-qualified experts. We have already been caught in a trap when the topic sounded really nice, while the person conducting the training was not raising our professional level.* »

Local CO

Informational support is quite important for organizations of the charitable and public sector. Heads of organizations often pay attention to the need of bringing in additional expertise, exchange of experience, access to data to make informed decisions. The support of promoting an organization and establishing its communications is also in demand.

The types of informational support that are in demand:

○ Data from sociological research.

○ PR support, services rendered by communication experts.

« *Informational support is of paramount importance in order to have an opportunity to popularize the things we do, so that as many people as possible learn about us.* »

Local PO

○ External expertise from different areas/spheres (based on the topics of projects).

○ Networking (search for useful contacts with donors). Support from the partnership manager.

○ Creating effective instruments for interaction with local authorities (algorithms, platforms).

○ Launching a platform for the exchange of both successful and unsuccessful experience between CSOs.

○ Exchange of experience at the international level.

« *It would be good to have exchange trips, the opportunity to travel to European foundations and communities, to exchange experience and [so that] these stages, these visits can be covered by the program.* »

Local CO

○ Development of security policies (mentioned only once).

The need for mental support is rarely mentioned by the representatives of public/charitable organizations. However, while answering a direct question about it, they emphasize the importance of this type of aid. Enormous workload, chronic stress (due to the war, contacts with vulnerable groups, etc.) and low financial motivation a significant number of employees in the sector are faced with burnout and exhaustion, evincing the need for mental support.

« *It is perhaps a more frequent request than in all other sectors since the public sector comprises people who work directly with socially vulnerable groups of population and deal with extremely difficult topics.* »

National PO

The respondents may rarely mention the need for mental support because they have taken care of this need on their own. Some large public/charitable organizations have formed departments for mental support for beneficiaries, having reserved some of their working time for their employees. There are organizations that bring in external therapists or turn to psychological centers on a paid basis and for free, while others make therapists members of their staff. Certain CF integrate practices of mental support into their working processes.

« *We practice a sort of a circle of trust. Our head team sits in for a joint team session with the therapist once every month or two. We raise some issues, discuss and share them, which is great. It works perfectly. I believe we lack such type of support.* »

National PO

Instead smaller organizations do not have the resources to attract experts that could offer qualified individual or group support. Therefore, they are very much interested in mental support.

> At the same time, large and small organizations of the public sector require funds to hold retreats and other events aimed to unite members of the team, which would help relieve tension in the collective and for the employees to recharge their batteries.

« *Mental health is in principle about the ability to support people who work to help others, about providing them with the opportunity to have some rest and offer retreats. This works in some organizations, but, for instance, our organization surely does not have the capability to cover such things.* »

National CO

« *There is lack of economic protection and lack of resources for one's own medical treatment. That is why conflict situations emerge from nowhere, one would think. Mental exhaustion leads to misunderstanding. Therefore, there has to be an opportunity of, as we call it, team-building processes.* »

Local CF

EXPERIENCE OF RESILIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT AMID WAR: APPROACHES, SOLUTIONS, INSTRUMENTS AND PRACTICES

2.1 Best practices of responding to present challenges

Present challenges require that organizations of the public sector react quickly and effectively, as well as introduce the best practices and approaches.

As a result of a survey conducted among experts in the public sector, we have formed a list of practices, approaches, solutions and instruments that can potentially let organizations remain effective amid general uncertainty, fatigue, competition for human resources and funds.

Some approaches and practices are of universal nature. They ensure resilience and effectiveness of organizations' work in general. Some are relevant to rise to certain challenges, such as shortage of professional and motivated staff, professional burnout and attraction of funds.
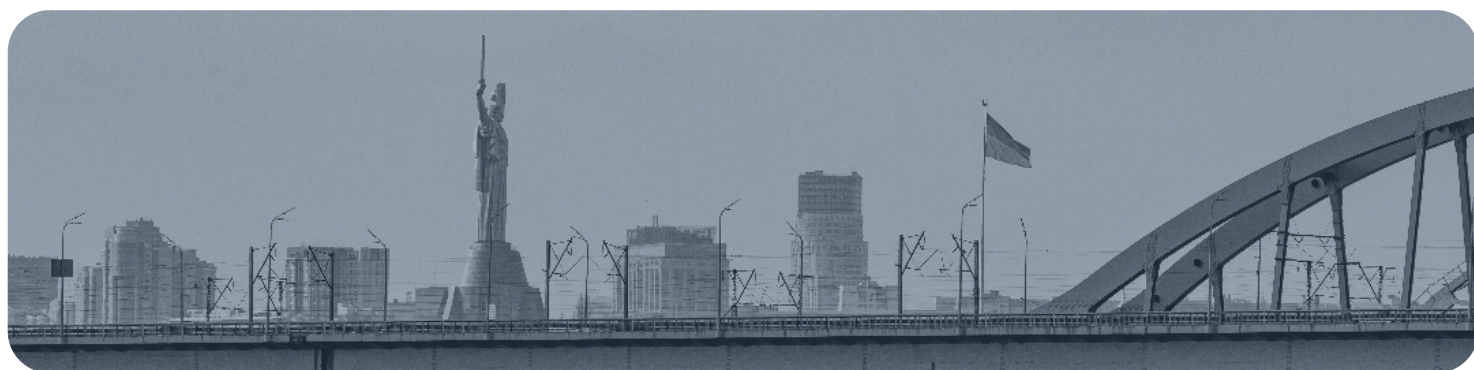
The universal approaches and practices that can strengthen organizations are:

- **Systematic and complex work in a concrete area. Refusal to implement diverse/irrelevant projects.** This approach allows concentrating on key topics, establishing a high level of expertise; foresee difficulties and consequences right during the launch of projects; ensuring sustainable results.

« *It is very important for an organization to have a strategic vision and its own niche that it is ready to occupy at the level of community since very often organizations are told to 'deal with the environment', or 'work with the youths' or 'work with future'. They need to concentrate on one thing.* »

Local PO

- **Strategic planning** is a mandatory component of work that lets avoid mistakes, optimize the use of resources, distributes workload among personne, and improves effectiveness of projects.

- **Active discussion / testing 'ideas' before they are implemented** with colleagues inside and outside of the sector in terms of their value and effectiveness; taking into account the mistakes made by who was trying to realize similar projects.

- **Reflecting on and documenting 'lessons learnt" after the completion of a project/one of its stages.** To improve future activities or to relieve tension between executors that occurs because of mistakes and bad luck.

» *We always check our ideas for whether they really make sense since when you work with them the whole day you lose concentration. A good practice is to not only introduce good ideas, but also abandon them when they prove not as good as it seemed at the beginning, or you can modify them so that they become better.*

National PO

» *We discuss thoroughly what went wrong and what things can be improved. This is one of the tools that help us hold the organization together so that everyone does not fall out with everyone else after the project is finished.*

National PO

Cooperation and networking. Active engagement in the cooperation between local authorities and local businesses, the media and colleagues from the sector. This approach enhances the capabilities of organizations to realize large-scale projects, facilitates attraction of funds, and allows reaching better results with less effort. The cooperation between organizations can assume quite diverse forms: exchange of information, data and resources; joint implementation of projects.

» *The cooperation with local authorities at the local level is, of course, important, as well as support for the business sector. Trilateral projects at the local level help organizations keep afloat and attract grant funds. The cooperation between local organizations with regional and national ones is certainly important as it helps become more visible and influential.*

Local PO

« We have the experience of running projects in teams that de jure are not united. We elect a responsible PO that suits this donor best and then carry out work jointly. This is one of the success stories – we unite resources to solve problems. Also, redirection works, when one of the partners has the resources, while the other one ensures access to the target audience. »

Local CO

Work with data (launching databases on beneficiaries and donors) helps make decisions based on data, analyze them and the effectiveness of work/projects, sufficiently justify the potential of new/current projects in work with donors.

« It is important to have your own system for what you do; to understand why you do it and what it can have an impact on, so that you then come to donors and substantiate everything with data. »

National CO

« It is very important because when you provide feedback for donors, you can then receive constant support from them. »

National CO

Agency in relationships with the donor means working within the framework of one's own strategy, putting across limits of capabilities of the organization to the donors in a clear manner, showing the ability to criticize donor's requirements and explaining why their vision 'will not work'.

International certificate (for example, obtaining a certificate of the American CAF) will help save time when undergoing checks and boost the reputation of a PO among donors).

« *One of the challenges is that all international donors want to conduct their own due diligence. In other words, they want to check each organization in accordance with their rules, with every donor subjecting each organization to rigorous checks. We have made our life easier by receiving the American CAF certificate. This means that we have already been verified by it.* »

National CO

Professionalization (heads of organizations receiving the MBA degree, learning managerial skills) helps build sustainable processes in organizations as well as management approaches.

Multi-vector orientation of separate units of the organization (e.g., coaches/mental support) наприклад, тренерів / психологічної підтримки) towards work both inside and outside of the organization. This, on the one hand, will boost loyalty / competencies of employees as well as burnish the positive image externally, on the other hand, it will ensure high-quality services for the personnel.

« *We had a camp offering mental support for the youth. Afterwards our experts did a winter school for them. They then did a retreat for our organizations and for the youths not affiliated with us. These activities really contribute to the organization's visibility. Subconsciously we do understand that we have these experts because people within the organization require mental support so as not to burn out.* »

National PO

Here are the effective practices to tackle personnel crisis (depletion of personnel/difficulties regarding headhunting) mentioned by experts:

○ Systematic and planned work in terms of training personnel. 'Breeding' experts within the organization.

○ Taking into consideration values and specific features of the 'Z' generation (the youth).

« *Meaningfulness of work is important here. The 'Z' generation is prone to changing jobs after the cycle of two years… and then a quick dose of dopamine. They need to show quick results of their work.* »

National CO

○ Working with the employer's brand. Creating an attractive brand that would motivate people to work with the organization.

○ Localizing donor funds. Convincing donors of the fact that funds are to be given to Ukrainian and not international organizations. This will avoid depletion of personnel in favor of international PO with disproportionately high salaries, as well as leave more funds for local organizations to pay for the personnel's work.

« *Actually, it is not only about employees. It is also about the fact that 45% of the funds provided for Ukraine are spent as administrative expenses of non-resident organizations. Let these funds end up more at the grassroots level.* »

National CO

○ Building a team (retreats, team building sessions).

Practices that effectively counter burnout of employees, include mental support, balanced workload, and cohesion.

○ Retreats (preferably with the opportunity to come to rest with a child or partner).

○ Payment of compensation for the services of mental support. Supervision meetings on burnout prevention.

○ Communications platforms that encompass an educational component / exchange of experience / communication, giving a feeling of belonging to a community.

○ Capacity building for the team.

○ Refusal to embark upon grant projects when donors set unfeasible requirements. As a rule, the attempts to realize such projects causes stress for the team.

Among the best practices that can strengthen fundraising we would like to single out the following ones:

○ Searching for innovative forms of work (e.g., volunteer fundraising).

○ Creating the culture of donations by launching podcasts, making a series of video or information campaigns that will popularize support of the public sector.

○   Building up trust in the sector, for example, by establishing a platform that would check and certify organizations in the public sector based on the evaluation system approved by the community / standards of work and publish a fair rating of PO.

○   Active communication with donors, advocacy, participation in different platforms at the national and international levels.

○   Positioning the business sector as a potential partner and not as a donor. The offer of win-win projects on a turnkey basis.

2.2 Enhancing effectiveness of the organization's work. Tools and solutions

Effectiveness of the work performed by organizations in the public sector depends not only on their ability to respond to external challenges, but also on their ability to develop in step with the times by introducing novel solutions and tools.

This progress has to encompass organizational processes, technological solutions and staff training.

The following effective changes during organizational process can be singled out:

Digitalization (IRP systems, OSI, CRM and system) **and automatization.**

« *OSI, IRP system makes your life really easier by establishing quick communication and institutional memory of the organization.*

National CO »

> « *We've got a very large networking organization, which is why we need to have lots of automated processes that are completed manually by people. Instead of dealing with some important issues, I mean, programs, strategic issues, many volunteers do things manually that can be done by a system.* »

National CO

Development of customized policies / procedures; systematization, establishing and improving processes. Clear description of duties..

> « *To establish and improve processes is important as they very often belong to the realm of intuition, they are not stated anywhere. Someone does understand them, while others don't. And sometimes they are duplicated.* »

National CO

The managerial model that pivots on the goals and key results (GKR) is a system of goal setting used to determine goals that are evaluated and to track their results.

> « *The Objective Key Result approach is a very cool thing. It is really effective. Our Ministry of Digital Transformation follows this model and approach in its work, as well as many businesses. Our team are now learning how to implement things, how to set and plan these goals, how to cascade and unite them from the top down and vice versa.* »

National CO

- **Using business processes in project management** (assessment of the rationality of projects).

- **Democratic governance,** abandoning the practice of concentration of processes and accountability heaped on one person. This practice prevents an organization from destruction in case one of its key employees resigns, as well as expedites the decision-making process as it is no longer needed to wait for a decision to be made by one person.

- **Creating the organization's image and expertise** (representation, participation in cross-sectoral events, speeches. All these things inspire the staff).

- **Constant communication and feedback** with the team, board, and external stakeholders, as well as citizens who make donations.

- **Developing one's own educational materials for employees.** For instance, recording online training, developing one's own instructions to complete the knowledge of project management, the so-called PV-book). Realization of plans of personal growth.

- **Building a system of motivating employees** (bonuses, retreats, etc.).

Effective technological solutions comprise:

- **IRP systems** (sets of software to manage businesses, which includes management of customer relationship management, e-commerce, billing, accounting, manufacturing, warehouse, project management and inventory management like Odoo, Asana).

CRM systems.

Task managers, working trackers (Jira, Miro, Workflow, Trello).

HR services (for instance, Hurma).

Sets of tools for business and data analysis (for instance, Power BI analytics).

Case management, customer service and feedback processing. This function is aimed to make monitoring calls to beneficiaries to ascertain the level of their satisfaction with services.

Artificial intelligence (AI).

Staff training

Practically all organizations conduct training for their employees. Large ones conduct training at the systematic level, investing time and money into this process.

They have their own expertise, developing customized training programs, building teams of coaches among their employees and bringing in expertise from outside. Small organizations are forced to leave training to personal responsibility of their employees or teach them during the implementation of practical things.

The widespread practices of staff training are:

○ Familiarizing employees with policies/manuals/instructions.

○ Weekly training on some of the modules.

○ Training on team building, leadership.

○ One-time specific training (e.g., for communications experts).

○ Mentoring. Training offered for the inexperienced by the experienced.

○ Participation in schools (e.g., from the business School of the Ukrainian Catholic University, the Institute of Leadership, theUkrainian Volunteer Service).

○ Bringing in external experts to conduct training based on projects' topics.

○ Participation in webinars (for instance, from ISAR Ednannia).

○ Camps.

○ Bringing in experts that can form a program on demand.

« *We have got training in different formats. We search for courses pro bono that our employees take. We also have international policies, offering internal training for our team in every field. We also provide our foundation's training for separate groups.* »

National CO

Thus, organizations teach their employees in different formats. However, one can see that **the issue of the potential of online resources is not addressed in the list of the popular forms of training.**

Representatives of large CSOs with substantial resources are known for their skeptical attitude towards training resources. Small organizations are less critical, though they emphasize the need for free access.

Disadvantages of training resources:

They mainly consist of courses on general topics. It is difficult to find a course that would include new or tailored information.

« *We rarely use online tools or training materials. This is a good method, but it corresponds to a rather basic level. Mid-level managers and above require more profound knowledge, and not only knowledge, lectures or materials. They are in need of training, practice and discussion of specific cases.* »

National CO

Training online is not emotionally charged. Normally the content is tedious and lacking variety. The format does not entail human contact. Participants find it hard to keep attention and motivation to complete the course.

« *I have lots of interesting tabs that I promise myself to check later... But i fail to find time for it...When there is lively communication, I will definitely be there. Plus, except for listening to lecturers we can also exchange experience between the participants, which I find more effective.* »

Local PO

Online resources do not bear any responsibility for the quality of the content they offer. There is a risk of spending money and time in vain because of low quality or insufficient amount of information provided in the course.

Online courses often contain information that is not tailored to the situation in Ukraine.

Training resources do not contain training courses on topics that would be relevant for Ukraine (for instance, for PO that work with the military).

At the same time, training resources can be useful for beginners who need basic knowledge. Also, their popularity can increase, should the following aspects be considered:

○ Availability of attached materials that can be easily found on demand.

○ Ability to choose the format of training (video, audio, text).

○ Short lessons, dynamic presentation of material.

○ Availability of implemented certification
   (e.g., the European Care Certificate).

Representatives of organizations seldom turn to these training resources: Prometheus, Coursera, EdEra, the platform of the Institute of Leadership, ISAR Ednannia, the Ukrainian Catholic University online, платформа Інституту, British Council, the Zagoriy Foundation, the Ukrainian Volunteer Service, the business school Laba.
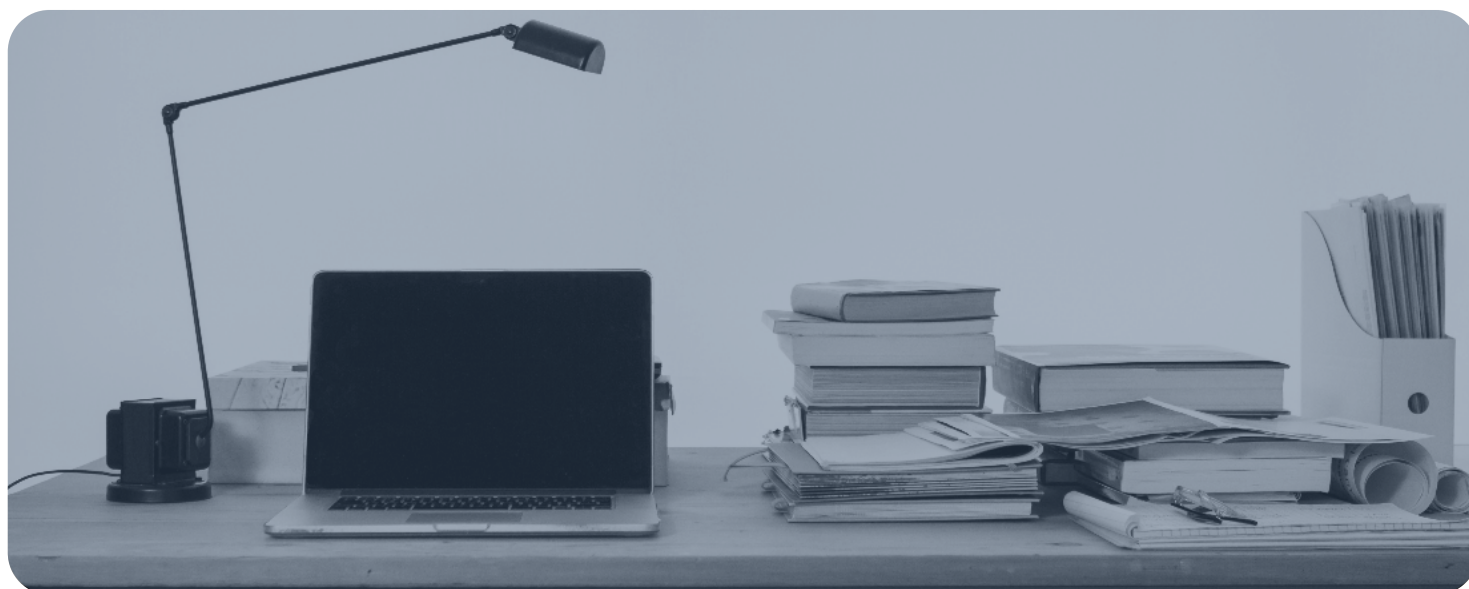
Some large organizations even place there
the courses they have developed themselves.

« *Our colleagues have done some of the courses, for example, on Coursera. This resource has both pros and cons. Some of our online courses are placed, for instance, on EdEra and Prometheus. Therefore, our colleagues and I cooperate and use them regularly.*

National PO

»

2.3 Cooperation and coordination

One of the factors (mentioned by the respondents) that has led to increased effectiveness of work of public organizations is cooperation between organizations in the public sector. This cooperation can take place between Ukrainian CSOs working in different areas or at different levels (local/national), as well as between Ukrainian and international PO.

> The assessment of the level of internal sectoral cooperation has demonstrated that with the outbreak of the war the coordination between Ukrainian organizations has strengthened. Nevertheless, despite the trend of growth, the level of cooperation remains insufficient.

Public organizations are guided situationally to complete projects, support information activities of one another on social networks, rarely exchanging experience and knowledge. Some organizations have come to realize that the development of a partner's network (for example, in regions) enhances their own capacity, which is why they have started to actively develop smaller PO. However, such cases are rather few and far between, leading to lack of understanding on the part of colleagues from the sector.

« *When our organization encouraged others to come to learn and receive advice on how to do fundraising, people came to us and said, 'You must be mad! Why are you sharing and giving knowledge away?'. It dawned on me then that we thought about one another as competitors.* »

National PO

The main reasons for insufficient level of cooperation within the sector are:

■ **Competition for resources** (donor funds).

《

> *The public organization that has a big foreign donor could hire someone as a contractor to have a camp organized for kids from, let's say, the de-occupied territories. However, they are afraid to do it as they suspect that in the future this donor will work with the contractor without intermediaries, which is why they try to organize everything on their own.*

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Local PO

■ **Lack of trust.** Lack of understanding of the level of responsibility/integrity that will be demonstrated by a partner organization.

《

> *Partnership is always about risks you cannot control. A majority of organizations tend to implement projects independently.*

》

National CO

■ **Lack of the culture of cooperation** as well as of the ability to build it in a way so that it becomes effective.

《

> *According to the stereotypes about partnership being a difficult thing to achieve, one needs more time, effort and resources to work together.*

》

Local PO

■ **Lack of communications, networking,** an established known network that could be joined.

> « *In Kharkiv there were newly-founded organizations that had been working well before the full-scale invasion. Accordingly, two separate bubbles occurred. Only about eight months later did they begin to get acquainted with one another.* »
>
> Local PO

■ **Excessive workload/project** activities/ search for funds, which results in the lack of strength and time to establish partnership or join other initiatives.

■ **Lack of leadership** as well as initiator of cooperation and exchange of experience.

> « *The public sector is of great importance. Any coordination and interaction implies operational burden. This operational burden is to be carried by someone. That is why we need a body that would coordinate and unite the public sector.* »
>
> National PO

Especially weak is the cooperation at the regional/local level. Local organizations predominantly compete for resources and are more often prone to taking other organizations for competitors and not potential partners. Also, networking events are rarely held at the local level.

Therefore, Ukrainian CSOs have to build an environment of trust and establish communication, if they want to build efficient networking. They also have to comprehend the pros of partnership and familiarize themselves with effective ways of cooperation.

To fulfill these tasks, which also means improving coordination and cooperation between Ukrainian organizations, the following data and tools could be of use:

- **Clusterization,** which means creating/expanding databases on the activities of organizations working in one area. Monitoring of activities should be conducted within clusters of not only national organizations, but also the local ones (at the level of communities). Personal meetings between heads of CSOs are to be held within clusters. Information support of participants is to be ensured.

« *Coordination of humanitarian response is conducted based on the cluster system. There is a system called ActivityInfo which collects data from all the organizations about their plans, the current situation and things already reported. I would say that over a half (if not more) of stakeholders involved in humanitarian response are active outside this system. Accordingly, it does not contain up-to-date data.* »

National CO

- **The coordination body** whose task would be to unite the public sector and, roughly speaking, exert control over reaching joint goals that were set.

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian (OCHA Ukraine) has cluster cooperation. In other words, there are different clusters, let's say, education, healthcare protection and so forth, and humanitarian organizations working in Ukraine hold regular meetings within the framework of these clusters. OCHA, for its part, carries out research, collects statistics, saying what kind of needs remain unmet.

Local PO

Mapping (information about what organizations wor in regions as well as their specialization and contacts). Creation of a portal like Dia Business where people can find partners.

Where every cluster can see the information it needs and influence it. It has to be unified and automated, organizations are to be informed and data collected thanks to technical solutions.

National PO

Joint database of research and analytics regarding target audiences/communities with which PO work
for instance, the needs and values of the youth, IDPs, etc.). This instrument is especially relevant for local organizations that do not have resources to gather data and analytics or access to information from open sources since analytics is rarely prepared for communities in villages.

Networking events and communications between head of organizations where they could exchange experience and problems, establishing cooperation (retreats, forums, conferences, presentations of surveys).

- **Specialized online forums** and portals for joint discussion of a certain topic.

- **Club for well-respected organizations that could put the needs of PO across to the state authorities.**

- **Platform for interaction and networking,** joint work on the elements of the filtration tools and monitoring, moderation and check of organizations for their integrity.

« *In a way it is about control and things like that, when you can check an organization, whether it reports in the public space, whether it has staff or the non-profit status, its main areas of activities. Now, to bring all the pieces of information together our team spends a lot of time.* »

Local PO

- **Coordination and information support from local authorities** (for example, regarding donors that want to support a community, searching for the executors of projects).

- **Information portal** where a grant offered by the government or donors, where people would be able to receive additional information/acquire knowledge (for instance, the information on relevant changes in legislation).

- **Single platform created by the government, offering information that is important to the sector.**

Cooperation in terms of information and resources exchange between international and Ukrainian organizations is evaluated ambiguously. On the one hand, in Ukraine one can find much information about new grant opportunities within the framework of various platforms, for example Ednannia, East Europe Foundation, etc.

On the other hand, local CSOs working at the community level find it difficult to establish direct contact with international organizations. **There is a demand for networking events** in order to search for potential partners and discuss the formats of cooperation in the context of a new reality in Ukraine.

The advantage of a closer discussion for both sides will be the synchronization of expectations for cooperation. For example, donors do not always pay attention to the specific features of work of smaller organizations (staff shortage to follow bureaucratic procedures), with Ukrainian organizations not understanding the necessity to comply with all requirements and policies of large international organizations.

« *Not all international organizations are adapted to today's challenges. However, the Ukrainian non-government sector has a penchant for demanding requirements. They want, for instance, to receive a large amount of funds, while at the same time undergoing some minor audits.* »

Local PO

Another effective tool for fostering cooperation could be a summary base of contacts of international organizations open to cooperation with their Ukrainian counterparts working at the level of communities or creation of a base of verified Ukrainian organizations/charitable foundations among which international organizations could select partners for cooperation.

A platform that could digitalize and verify all public organizations. They could be marked there as verified, i.e., having websites, reporting, accounts on social networks, the head. Main areas of work. Then the Ministry of Digitalization would recommend these organizations as cooperation-worthy. This can help donors understand whom they should support.

National PO

Sustainable functioning of online platforms of many kinds would not only launch the process of communication without intermediaries, but will also simplify the process of fundraising.

An American organization and its Ukrainian counterpart, Spivdia, coordination the platform Need List in Ukraine. International donors saw the needs faced by Ukrainian POs and contacted them directly. This tool is very effective. When grant funds are over, the platform stops functioning.

National CO

The main component of enhancing the efficiency of information and resources exchange is the joint reflection on strengths and weaknesses of cooperation at the end stage of the project, which ensures a better understanding of the specific features of each other's work. This enables one to take 'the lessons learned' from this cooperation into account.

Finally, to some extent the effective exchange of information and resources with Ukrainian and international organizations is hindered by the language arries. A substantial number of the representatives of organizations at the local level do not have a fluent command of English. Materials and knowledge that their colleagues from Europe and the USA are ready to share need to be translated and adapted. Therefore, grants for covering the translation services would be of relevance.

In general in order to improve the cooperation between Ukrainian and international organizations it is necessary o put in effort by both parties.

Ukrainian organizations (mostly the ones working at the local/regional levels) have to improve their visibility, which implies more active external communication about their activities, uniting into intersectoral coalitions and a good command of English to conduct negotiations and self-presentation.

« *Much hinges on Ukrainian PO, on the extent to which they are open and on communicating about their activities. Lots of local initiatives pay scant attention to this, with international organizations knowing nothing about them.* »

Local PO

On the other hand, international organizations are expected to consider the Ukrainian context. Local CSOs and beneficiaries are to be involved in the process of strategic project planning. There also has to be trust in the expertise of executors.

« *From what I have seen, the most important thing is for them not to try to extrapolate the experience of other countries to Ukraine as it will not work here.* »

Національна ГО

COOPERATION WITH DONORS. DESIRABLE CHANGE AND EXPECTED SUPPORT

Representatives of Ukrainian public organizations and charitable foundations are in general satisfied with their cooperation with donors. However, this evaluation depends on the quality of regular cooperation and the level of fluency of communication. Those who actively work with donors, often give complimentary feedback, whereas those who face challenges in attracting funds (these are mainly organizations of local and regional levels) are more reserved in their assessment.

> Against a general positive backdrop the participants of the research at different level of their organizations emphasize a few drawbacks of cooperation, namely a long process of approvals/decision–making process, complex reporting, establishing frameworks for the activities of an organization (influence wielded on the areas of work, censorship) and complicated communication (which is believed to be caused by the human factor and not the style of communication found in an organization).

Quite often the participants of the survey mentioned the fact that international donors **plan their activites 'at their desks', without taking the Ukrainian context into consideration,** when setting requirements for the executors of the project. This leads to projects being imposed, which are not tailored to local circumstances, and to lower efficiency of organizations' work.

The issue of poaching highly-skilled personnel for better salaries is also quite critical. This undermines the ability of local organizations to implement projects.

The policy of project financing also has a bearing on the public sector of Ukraine, which means lack of desire to cover the expenses incurred by organizations on the maintenance of their offices and salaries for personnel who are directly involved in the projects.

Finally, donors often give priority to international organizations when it comes to cooperation. In such cases, work is performed by Ukrainians. However, most funds remain abroad as a payment for administering projects. This, in turn, results in less funds allocated directly for Ukraine, excluding the allocation of funds for the organizational development of Ukrainian CSOs and charitable foundations.

Therefore, Ukrainian organizations expect from donors to:

Take the Ukrainian context into account when setting strategic goals, adaptivity/readiness for a project to be changed.

Donors that have worked in Asia or Syria come to Ukraine and believe that the same methods are going to work here. Very often do we see such approach or vision on the part of donors. We think of these approaches as non-starters.

National CO

Conduct research on relevant needs on the ground. Reject the idea of realizing premature/image projects, such as post-war recovery, while basic humanitarian needs have not been met yet.

Familiarize themselves with Ukrainian tax legislation.

« *Donors want to impart their expertise here in Ukraine after having worked, say, in Pakistan. They go like, "Can't you simply give cash to organizations?". I said, 'No, because I don't want to wind up behind bars'. They had better get a better understanding of our laws and the Ukrainian context.* »

National PO

Trust in the executors of projects/ expertise of Ukrainian public and charitable organizations. Take into account opinions and experience of local CSOs who know better the needs of their region/country and have already established mechanisms for receiving feedback from beneficiaries.

Cooperate directly with executors of projects without intermediaries (for instance, represented by local authorities or international organizations).

« *They think that equipment has to be necessarily passed to the city council as they believe that this body will exist there forever. And then we are faced with a conflict as we can't use free equipment that has been purchased to offer free services because we have to rent this equipment from the city council.* »

Local PO

Improve coordination with donor organizations.
Although donors require networking and coordination from Ukrainian organizations, they themselves may not always coordinate this division of areas of responsibility (project areas) in the sector, which results in lack of efficiency and double work.

Abandon the practice of unethical recruitment.

« *As of 2016/2017 the situation in the cities such as Kramatorsk, Slovyansk and Severodonetsk was catastrophic because international organizations came and headhunted all of the employees of local organizations. There was hardly an organization left that could receive grants.*

National CO

»

Lower the number of bureaucratic processes. This is especially true for CSOs at the local/regional levels that face limited personnel resources. At times, the process of reporting may take more time than the implementation of the project as such.

So as to simplify the process of applying for grants, preliminary selection might be carried out based on proposed ideas, so that organizations spend less time to draw up a full-fledged proposal.

Reduce the impact/weaken the pressure on program activities of an organization: by not defining the capabilities of a partnership or influencing the areas of work.

« *I once saw some large organizations turn into a small one by changing the area of activities as their main donor stopped giving money to tackle one specific issue and redirected the funds to another one. So the organization totally changed its profile.* »

National PO

Allow sufficient time to prepare and begin a project. Tight time frames lead to the team suffering from stress, to mistakes in planning and ineffective steps.

Have realistic expectations. Short-term results are not to be expected (long-term results will hardly be demonstrated after 3 or 6 months), set realistic indicators.

« *Often donors demand from Ukrainian public organizations to live up to some indicators, without taking into consideration the real situation in regions. This forces organizations to search for beneficiaries who would deliver on these indicators, instead of concentrating on delivering sustainable aid.* »

Local PO

Reject the stereotype of low effectiveness of organization's activities in particular regions.

« *A sort of a world view has formed itself where everyone believes that our region is very bad at working with donors. This is the attitude they share to the region. Even if we consider the territories located close to the front line, Zaporizhzhia does not even end up on their list.* »

Local CO

Show empathy in communications, lend support.

Provide feedback on grant applications that lost the competition.

Also, participants of the survey do not feel secure about the CSOs' absolute ability to withstand the instability brought about by the war. In these circumstances donors can strengthen the sustainability of Ukrainian organizations' work and promote their institutional development.

Effective support of CSOs by donors consists of three elements.

1. First, grants have to include administrative and overhead costs to support operational work and ensure personnel stability. This aspect is of special relevance for small-sized organizations.

In the future public organizations and charitable foundations will want to become less dependent on donor funds. However, to achieve this they need to grow institutionally by training personnel, framing internal policies and describing processes. Therefore, meanwhile the program of long-term support (not project support) will be relevant, which will help enhance capacities of organizations.

Also, projects of widening the network of partner organizations in communities will contribute to the institutional growth of CSOs.

2. Second, organizations lack available funds that would be earmarked not for contingencies related to the adaptation to the consequences caused by the war (for instance, to purchasing power banks in view of power outages).

« *I have a feeling that none of the donor organizations think about what will happen in the winter because then we will face lots of issues connected with power outages. Currently we do not have mechanisms for redirecting some of the resources, for instance, to procure power banks or some other things that ensure the work of the team in the winter.* »

Національна ГО

3. Third, donors should organize roundtable discussions, create discussion platforms, engage local organizations in long-term planning so as to design relevant programs based on practical experience and expertise of national/local CSOs.

« *Various discussion platforms are to be organized. We need to move on to implementing joint initiatives even at the level of an oblast or several regions. This would help learn more about different initiatives in oblasts or communities, as well as receive fund.* »

Local PO

In addition, the respondents of the survey came up with an idea of launching an international fundraising platform (similar to dobro.ua).

A long list of recommendations and expectations from donors testifies to the fact that despite gratitude (and a declared satisfaction with cooperation) national charitable and public organizations see plenty of opportunity for improving relations and project activities in Ukraine.

CLOSING REMARKS

External factors (war, volatile economic situation, etc.) exert an enormous impact on the activities and sustainability of organizations. However, the public and charitable sectors in Ukraine have effectively adjusted themselves to new circumstances. Not only have these sectors withstood challenges and changes, but they have also responded to them by growing and strengthening institutional capacity.

It goes without saying that each organization has encountered its own problems and challenges. However, some of them are felt by the majority and obviously they are characteristic of the sector in general: staff shortage and burnout of employees, lower financial support from international donors and the population, pressure on the part of state regulatory bodies, uncertainty and economic instability.

Smaller organizations fare noticeably worse as they experience more problems when attracting funds, keeping highly-skilled personnel together, accumulating resources for training, enhancing expertise and promoting their brands).

To respond to these challenges one would need to foster organizational development, to introduce new technological solutions and managerial practices; participate in training and enhance expertise; pursue cooperation and coordination. However, these solutions require financial resources (e.g., grants for institutional development) and experts. These things are now lacking.

Partly these resources could be provided by donors and international organizations, not only in the form of grant support, but also of the readiness to share their own experience, offer mentoring support, launch platforms for experience exchange, cooperation and coordination of efforts.

It would also be appropriate for the government to offer its support, including the creation of a less regulated environment for charitable and public organizations.

At the same time, considerable potential is present inside the public sector in Ukraine. Exchange of experience and best practices, cooperation in terms of implementing projects and networking can reinforce each organization in particular and community in general. However, organizations still do not devote enough time to coordination and cooperation with other organizations, very rarely being members of some bigger communities (formal or informal ones) in view of the lack of resources and time to undertake activities outside their projects. Due to constant search for funds organizations rather aim to establish partnership relations with donor organizations than to seek intersectoral partnerships.

We hope that this research has offered the community of donors, CSOs and representatives of state authorities a better understanding of the problems and needs of the sector, having highlighted the possible ways of tackling the former and meeting the latter.

PHILANTHROPY IN UKRAINE

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS FACED BY THE UKRAINIAN NON-PROFIT SECTOR