



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# DIGEST OF MARKETPLACE

Civil Society  
Development Platform

Stories of growth, changes, and success

Kyiv 2017



# About Marketplace



Civil Society Development Platform (MARKETPLACE) is a five-year project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that has been implemented by ISAR Ednannia in partnership with other NGOs and the Presidential Administration of Ukraine. The goal of the project is to strengthen organizational capacity of Ukrainian civil society organizations (CSOs) so that they are more efficient in implementing their missions, reforms, protecting the rights of citizens, and cooperating with government agencies.

MARKETPLACE is a unique platform with long and special history in Ukraine. Its inception, development, launch and implementation involved many respected organizations and reputable figures. They have been united by understanding of importance of the organizational development for further progress of the civil society.

Since 2009, MARKETPLACE has been mentored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Government of Sweden (SIDA), UNDP, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, International Renaissance Foundation, Pact/UNITER Project, RESPOND project, Save the Children, Microsoft Ukraine, and many talented people who selflessly invest their efforts to improve this unique product. The essence of MARKETPLACE remains the same: any Ukrainian civil or charitable organization is able to receive a competitive grant at

[cd-platform.org](http://cd-platform.org)

to pay for services aimed at development and improvement of its operations.

An important event that is part of MARKETPLACE Platform is Civil Society Development Forum, held annually in Kyiv along with educational webinars and Community of Practice meetings, where participants discuss various issues of organizational development.

In 2015, an independent external assessment of MARKETPLACE's influence upon the development of the civil society was held. The results confirm that

**MARKETPLACE is shaping the culture of organizational development and thus helps strengthening the civil society in Ukraine.**

# Organizational development

**Organizational development includes all measures that help an organization become more professional, more influential, and more efficient. Organizational development also stipulates for development of four key capacities:**



## Technical capacities –

are capacities of the organization's direct activities and include increase of the quality of services rendered by the organizations to their target audiences; approval of standards of the organizations' activities; and development of competencies within certain sector of the organization's activities.

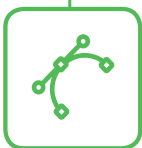
*For instance, if an organization operates in the human rights sector, its technical capacities include the deepening of its knowledge of human rights and building skills of human rights protection with the use of various approaches and mechanisms.*



## Institutional capacities –

are capacities required for sustainable, continuous, and reliable fulfillment of mission and tasks by an organization. These capacities include the development of systems and structures for management and governing of the organization, financial management, development of human resources, mobilization of other resources, etc.

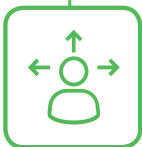
*For instance, if an organization operates in the human rights sector, its institutional capacities include improvement of operation processes of its managing body, the management of the organization, project management, strengthening of cities to mobilize financial and human resources for human rights protection, etc.*



## Adaptive capacities –

are capacities of an organization to react to political, socio-economic, and cultural changes that affect the environment where the organization operates.

*Important skills for adaptive capacities are strategic and operation planning, analysis and evaluation skills, planning of activities based on evaluation, etc.*



## Influential capacities –

are capacities of an organization to affect the environment it operates in. Such capacities include advocacy skills, negotiation skills, communication skills, development of cooperation and partnership within the sector and with actors from other sectors.

*For instance, if an organization operates in the human rights sector, its influential capacities include its ability to affect decision-making, to involve partners from different sectors of the society for solving various problems.*

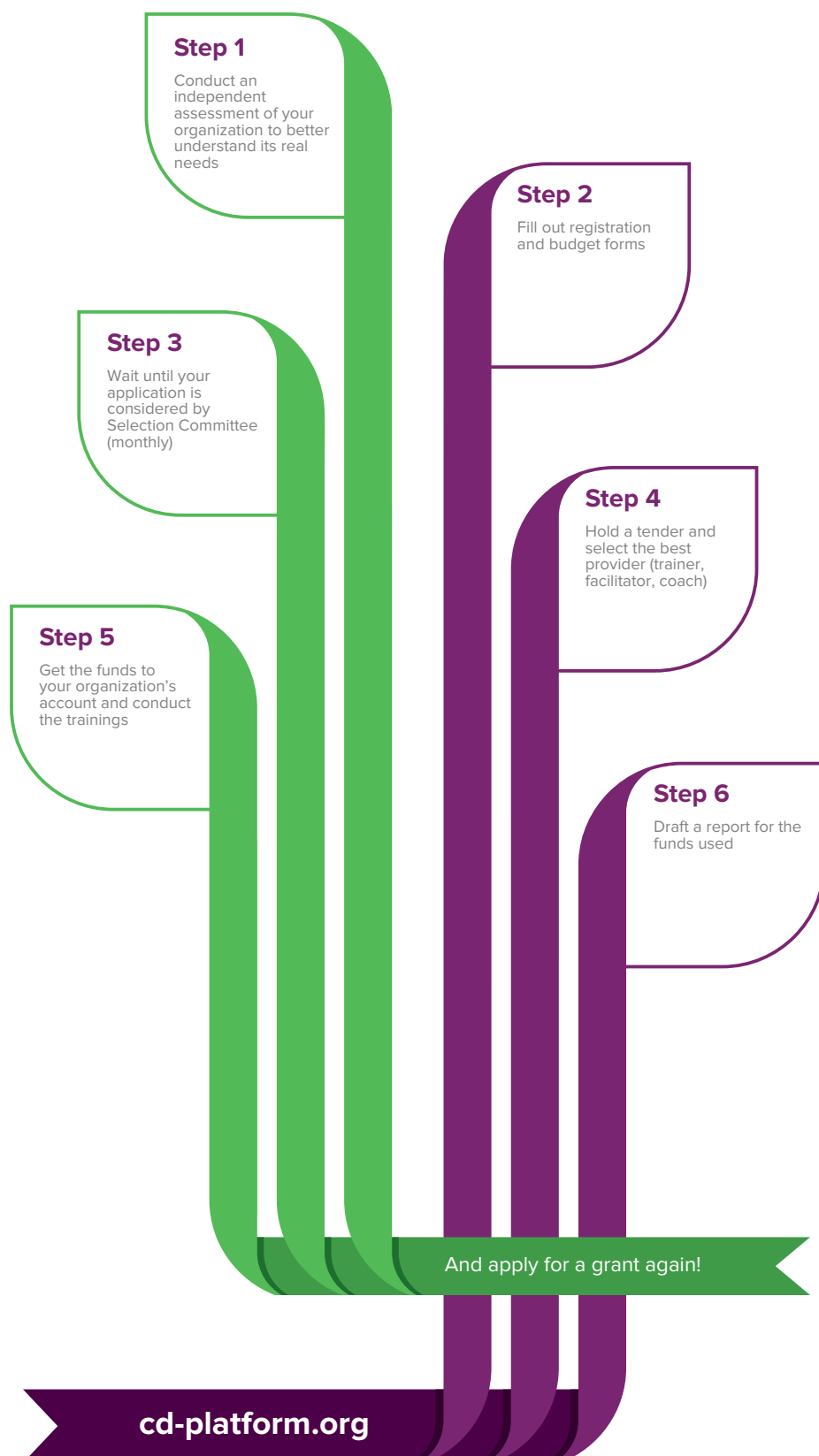
The most widespread form of organizational development is learning with subsequent implementation of changes into daily operations of the organization. Other popular methods include trainings, consultation, facilitated discussions, guidance for development or correction of internal policies and procedures, participation in training courses and schools.

**To pay for these services, organizations can apply for a mini-grant from the MARKETPLACE Platform.**



# How to receive a mini-grant

that will cover services for organizational development:



IN 2016

**204**

organizations received mini grants for their own education and development within the MARKETPLACE Platform

for the total amount of **UAH 7 139 761**

This includes:

**174 GRANTS**  
for the total amount of **UAH 2 961 125**

supported by the United States Agency for International Development

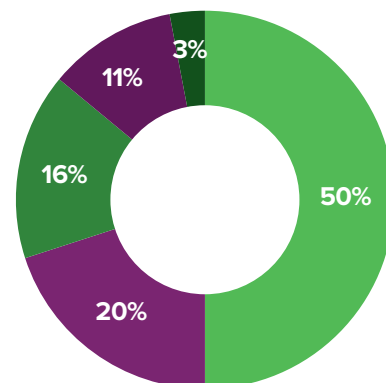
**28 GRANTS**  
for the total amount of **UAH 4 087 067**

supported by RESPOND Project

**3 GRANTS**  
for the total amount of **UAH 91 572**

funded by Save the Children's office in Ukraine

Allocated grants aimed at organizational development, by goal:



- Strategic planning
- Fundraising
- Advocacy
- Learning at schools/taking courses
- Communications and working with media, project management, monitoring and evaluation, audit preparation

# Stories of growth, changes, and success

## Strategic planning protects you from problems!

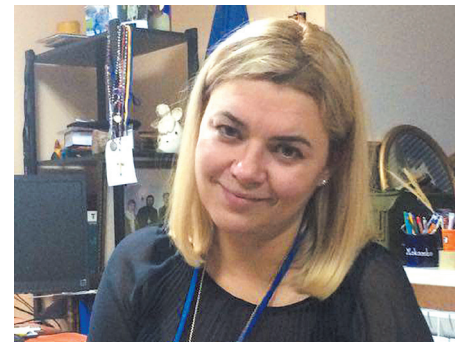


This is what people from Eleos Ukraine say. Eleos Ukraine solves problems not tackled by other organizations. In addition to protecting human rights, activists hold events aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention and teach religious organizations how to cooperate with authorities. One of their key activities now is mobile hospice aid in the anti-terrorist operation (ATO) area in Ukraine's Donbas.

This broad scope of activities requires special approach in strategic planning. Eleos Ukraine received two grants aimed at strategic planning of the organization through the Civil Society Development Platform.

"I have known Volodymyr Sheihus for a long time, so I heard about the Platform as well," says Serhii Dmytriev, the head of Eleos Ukraine. "Our organization took off in 2014, and we had to decide where to go, what to focus on, and how to allocate available resources. So we decided to take it to the Platform. I must say that very few projects in Ukraine offer help with organizational development in the public sector."

In two years, the organization decided to refresh its development vision. "We were worried whether they would agree to support us again, for we had already had our strategic planning and were now asking for another grant," says Dmytriev. But his organization managed to convince the donors that they needed another 'rebranding' as Eleos Ukraine started expanding and opening offices throughout Ukraine.



Strategic planning, Dmytriev says, is the foundation for any organization's activities, so they were choosing their trainers responsibly. "It was important for us to select not just professionals but people who were respected by the team, with whom no one would argue. We even had bishops writing strategic plan on the floor with everyone else because this is what the trainer said. Another important criterion for trainer selection was their experience in what we do, so that the team could better understand why it needs planning in this or that," the head of Eleos Ukraine says.

"Given that the organization cooperates with the church, the most discussed issue was the nature of the organization: whether it would be spiritual guidance or that of secular nature.

Thus it was very important to hear an external opinion. The trainers forced us to act, but they didn't do our job instead of us, they just helped us to prioritize. We wouldn't have developed a strategic plan without external aid because we had to tidy up the chaos that arose."

Eleos Ukraine intends to keep expanding its activities, including in the social entrepreneurship sector. But the current priority of the organization is to do what it has planned to do.

Dmytriev says the team was very critical when evaluating its organizational capacity — they assessed it very low at first, but heated debates that followed made them think of their strengths and weaknesses.

The head of Eleos Ukraine says that an

organization aimed at development cannot neglect its strategic planning. "You see, representatives of NGOs are real adventurers, and they often do not think of the future for their organization, of some long-term goals, and this might lead to some problems. In order to avoid them, strategic planning is needed," Dmytriev says.

In addition to webinars by the Civil Society Development Platform, the representatives of the organization also participated in the Civil Society Development Forum. "We also want to be trained in fundraising. Not just for the sake of it, but to assess our resources correctly and to think what else we need to be efficient," the organization said.



## Hromadske Chernihiv: “Our desire to hold a strategic planning session “infected” other Chernihiv organizations”



Activists of Hromadske Chernihiv operate in two directions: public activities and information activities. To systematize their work and reach new goals, the organization asked the Civil Society Development Platform for help with a strategic planning session. Anastasiia Uliusheva, a reporter for Hromadske Chernihiv, told us about the planning of the process and its outcomes.

We started as an organization in August 2014. On one hand, it was a reaction to the Revolution of Dignity, on the other — we were set as a subsidiary of Hromadske [Kyiv-based media— ed.] in Chernihiv. We were involved mostly in information activities until mid-2015. But then a big break occurred — we terminated our contract with Kyiv and reformatted our activities. Since then, our organization has taken its place in the public activities scene

of the city. We’ve existed for more than three years, but it was not until recently that we set a clear mission. It’s great that the mission has been supported by the entire team: none of the members left the organization after the strategic planning session was held.

We worked on this for about a year, all of us together, and we realized that we needed outside help to make it clear. There is this great principle that

**what’s not on paper, does not exist.**

This was true about our planning — it was somewhere out there, we kind of knew what we wanted, but we wanted it to be clear not only to us, but also to our audience. In summer 2017, we realized we were not able to do it on our own, so we asked ISAR Ednannia for help.

### — Tell us about the results of the strategic planning?

— It’s an interesting story. We were very pleased to inform everyone about the planning session and ask everyone about convenient dates. Most of the people changed their plans and personal arrangements for these two days; they just dived into the session for these days

and nights as well. Those were two days and nights of crazy work. It was also very pleasing to have representatives of the board at the session, to have the chair of the supervisory board, all members of the organizations, volunteers. We also invited people whose opinion mattered to us. So this session was comprehensive: we had lively discussions and they resulted in a strategic plan.

### We drafted an 80-page document with a detailed analysis

what we want. Having defined all plans and directions makes our work much easier now. We are even starting to implement some stuff now that is planned for the next year.

### — Did you find any new directions during the planning session?

— We realized we have a problem that many organizations experience: the scope of our activities is too broad. Our organization has its peculiarity: on one hand, it’s a public organization; on the other hand, it’s a media outlet, as our activities are aimed and gathering



and processing information for the sake of public reporting.

When we realized we have these two large-scale directions of informing the public and working with the public, the following started to happen: other recently created public organizations of the city started to gather around us. Our stimulus to hold a strategic planning session spread on them as well. It was kind of a virus because we have high demands towards ourselves. And the organizations we communicate with also wish not just to change the country but to change themselves and become leaders in their sectors. We also have strong connections with other public organizations because we have the media outlet to tell about the NGOs of our city, to show what they can be and why the city needs them. We want success for both ourselves and them.

**— Did the team have any fears related to involving an outside expert?**

— We tried to do it ourselves, within the organization, but it was kind of bottled. So we realized we needed an outside view because we were stewing and sticking in our own juice. During such discussions we would focus on unimportant—and we realized it quickly. It should be mentioned that when we held the tender and were processing the applications from trainers,

**the entire team participated in selection of the person to work with us.**

We also, as a team, checked this trainer though other public organizations: asked them whether they know this person and their opinions.

When we all gathered at a round table, there was a fear that in the process of the discussion we will end up with different activities from what we used to do, but during the strategic planning session we came up quickly with what our values are. We didn't even spend time on it — we came up with the areas of activity really quickly and realized they were all in place already. The only thing we had to do was to formalize it and voice to everyone so that we all shared them. For us, strategic planning was a confirmation of moving in the right direction and that

**all people in the organization shared the same values.**

It was a nice thing to know that we had formed our team in just three years, a team of people who shared moral values. It was such a relief.

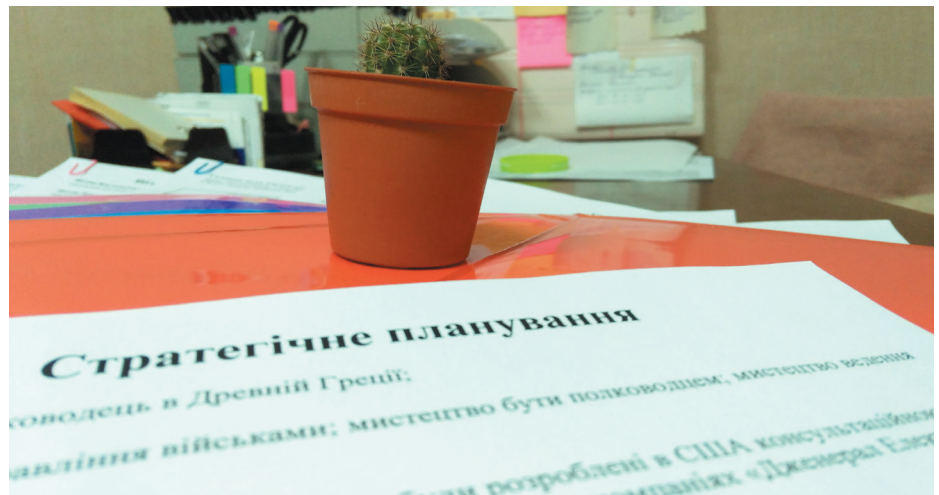


**— On your opinion, why many organizations believe that strategic planning is just a waste of resources?**

— I think these are not barriers, but different types of thinking. When we were holding the session, we faced the fact that many people in our organization think from general big problems to certain acts, and some people tend to think in the opposite direction. I think it's the matter of the way people think, and of understanding that the person who comes to them will help see those peculiarities and realize them. On the other hand, what are public organizations? They are creative desire to implement changes. Quick registration with typical charters is a problem of numerous organizations. But an organization is a living and

evolving organism, it's a mechanism that must have its structure, and this structure has to work like a clock. When one small screw breaks, the entire structure might go off. Maybe they just have this fear that document bureaucracy will kill the desire and impetus to work.

We see here in Chernihiv that public organizations are in need of people who are able to solve these document-related problems. If an organization has such a person, the issue of strategic planning often goes off the agenda. If an NGO is registered with a purpose, the issue of the planning just disappears. But if the only thing they want is to get a one-time grant, or just keep receiving grants (regardless of topic), then the matter of strategic planning is taken off the table because they don't need it.



**— What do you think of granting procedures and communication with managers?**

— It was another fear of ours. Before receiving the grant, we weren't self-assured enough and scared to make mistakes, but talking with managers helped us overcome this fear.

**They are very contact people who we could call and ask questions.**

For instance, we panicked over timely delivery of our reports to them. But it's nice to know that the managers realize they work with young organizations with no experience of dealing with documents, financial statements, and this understanding helps us calm down and focus on our activities.



## Leader of Zoloti Roky NGO Liudmyla Hryshko:

**“Number of elderly people is increasing, and the need to act professionally is growing”**



**Zoloti Roky is a Lviv-based public organization that has made a statement in the public sector. Despite being a young organization, its audience is mostly elderly people. Leader of the organization, Liudmyla Hryshko, told us about the potential of public activity of elderly people, implementation of important projects, and shared her recommendations on how to use possibilities correctly.**

We work in the following directions: informal education of elderly people, health support programs, art programs and tours, and exchange of experience among people of declining years.

I learned about the Civil Society Development Platform project during the Civil Society Development Forum, in which I have participated three times. We received the first support for the development of a strategic plan and a fundraising strategy for 2016-2019.

16 people were involved in development of our strategic plan, including activists and organization members. We are very happy with the process because we indeed discussed things that we were interested in and believed them to be achievable, but we didn't know then how to organize the process correctly. Our strategic plan is 40 pages long — now we know that

**not every organization has such a plan.**

We read and review it regularly as it gives us better understanding of what we do, where we go, and how it should be. It's sad to say that we hoped to start broader activities this year in the region, just like provided by the strategic plan — to have 10 activity centers. But it's all up ahead.

The person who holds the session, a trainer, is very important and we are grateful to Oksana Ivaniv, who accepted our invitation to help us. This was when we realized

**that an outside person is less biased in its help: she is not the enemy,**

she came to help. During the selection process, we received 12 applications from trainers and organizations. When we met these people later during various events, we once again made certain that we had made a right choice. All those trainers would have been 'too strong' for us, as we need a special approach to elderly people who must understand the point.

When we developed our strategy, everyone had the right to express his or her opinion and position. We were choosing the right words and correct messages so that the people who would come to us or use our services were able to understand who we are as an organization. The level of trust is important for us. On one hand, we realized that people trust us, but on the other, we had to determine our values and where we're heading. We review our plans regularly. It just happens — some new people join us, or some of employees get more interested. But we feel proud that we have this strategic plan and a fundraising strategy: we are now regarded as a 'grown-up' and responsible organization with all required features. We thank ISAR Ednannia for the possibilities it gave us.

Now we want to have impact on local policy. They only finance veteran and disabled people organizations, so the question is why, don't people aged 55+ have needs? So we are in search for instruments to change local policy and, of course, learning to provide social services. We have visited a conference titled University of Third Age, where we met similar organizations and decided that

**we need to develop a complex program aimed at supporting elderly people**

together with local governance bodies of several cities. We realize that if we do not do that, no one will! There are many active people in Lviv, and in seven years that I've been working in this field I have seen that these people do not operate necessary methods and tools for public impact.

I am quite often invited by public organizations led by people aged 50+. Unfortunately, they run their organizations just like old times, in the past century. They are not aware of all those new skills we have learnt from ISAR Ednannia. So we plan to organize several round tables to tell them about other possibilities.

Today we are proud to have great partners and hope our network will increase. Last year we were able to get budget funding to represent our city and country abroad in the sector of possibilities for elderly people, together with participants from 10 European countries. This allowed us holding the same festival in Lviv, again at budget funds. It's nice that our team is growing. We have become more serious of an organization, and many people address us. Of course, we still lack knowledge, but we keep working on it. And MARKETPLACE Civil Society Development Platform helps us with that.



# A possibility for public organization development — learning experience of large organizations



**Terra Nova Charitable Foundation from Lviv has tried out another possibility offered by the Civil Society Development Platform — internship in another organization. In September 2016, the team of Terra Nova traveled for an internship program to Odesa-based ‘Doroha k Domu’ (Road home) organization and learned interesting things there.**



Terra Nova Charitable Foundation deals with drug addiction and HIV/AIDS prevention and implements social entrepreneurship projects aimed at homeless people. Odesa-based Doroha k Domu Charitable Foundation that hosted the organization from Lviv deals with rehabilitation and social adaptation of homeless people. Terra Nova director Volodymyr Kovalevskiy says that it was very efficient for the entire team of his organization to see from inside how the organization with similar mission but bigger experience operates.

“I traveled to Odesa together with our psychologist and accountant. The experience learning was very useful because the organization we visited is much stronger. We looked into their fields of activities and saw how they work with street urchins directly ‘in the field.’ We have seen with our own eyes how

they provide social and informational support to this vulnerable category of the population. The trip turned out useful for all of us: I as a director was interested how they govern the organization, and our accountant was advised on accounting matters,” Kovalevskiy says.



The internship resulted in Terra Nova borrowing a program from Doroha k Domu to work with street urchins. However, the Lviv organization is not yet able to implement it like they do in Odesa. One of the reasons is that it’s hard to find donor funds for such project. In addition, the director of Terra Nova says, street kids are a bit different in Lviv from Odesa. “If compared, Odesa has more kids that live on the streets, in basements. The problem is bigger there, and they need to work with HIV/AIDS prevention. In Lviv, the number of street urchins is smaller, and most of them are children of seasonal guest workers who spend their nights at railway stations,” Kovalevskiy says.

The self-assessment tool that Terra Nova used while applying for the grant also helped the organization to develop. Kovalevskiy says the evaluation increased the foundation’s assuredness in certain directions of its operations, as well as stimulated to improve weaknesses: “To use the self-assessment tool, we took management of those who worked on the project and discussed it jointly. With some questions, we were not sure how to evaluate ourselves, but we tried to be honest. I can say for sure that after the visit, many issues became more understandable and better structured.”

The organization plans to continue boosting its activities aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention and develop social entrepreneurship in Lviv.

Terra Nova knew of the Civil Society Development Platform even before its registration as an organization. They say the managers of the Platform do great. The director of the charitable foundation said they liked how quick the application was reviewed as well as transparent and clear terms and conditions for receiving a grant. They also make active use of webinars, another opportunity offered by the Platform.





## Do not be afraid of competition — just do something valuable!



Olha Lavryk

### — What are key directions of your organization's activities?

— Working with teachers and schoolchildren. This year, we were implementing two projects: a school one on rational use of resources and energy, and trainings for teachers on climate change and facilitation in schools.

### — Why did you decide to turn to the Civil Society Development Platform and how did you use the support?

— The support was used for our organizational development — I received funds to cover my study in the Ukrainian Catholic University's management of non-profit organization program. I am still a student there. I received a grant to cover one half of the tuition fee, and the study helped us to launch organizational development in our Kolehiia ekologichnoii osvity. We have developed a communication strategy for the organization and now start to develop a general strategy.

### — Do you develop it on your own?

— Using the knowledge I gained in the university, we are trying to organize it on our own. Another task in UCU is social entrepreneurship:

**we are developing a business plan for our organization's social business.**

We have to come up with a product or service for the organization to make money.

**In order to develop, an organization needs not only interesting projects but constant improvement of its management. Olha Lavryk, director of Kolehiia ekologichnoii osvity Svit osvity Public Organization (World of Education Ecological Education Collegium), who received a grant from ISAR Ednannia for enrollment in Management of non-profit organization master's program, is a successful example. Olha told us in an interview what public activists learn from the program and how to implement the knowledge in real life.**



### — As a rule, public organizations first learn how to write a grant application, and you started learning social entrepreneurship. How realistic is it to implement a social business project in public sector?

— It is realistic; many organizations have a social business component. For instance, a bakery for low-income women in Lviv. I know many organizations that conduct paid training sessions and spend money on organizational development. I believe it is realistic, you just need to have an idea. Ours will be definitely from the sector of environment and education.

### — Why did you decide that you needed development, i.e. to study at the program?

— Because we are a young organization and we realize it is not possible to live on grants only —

**you must create additional value for the society.**

We also realize that this is OK for any organization with a team and qualifications like ours. We managed to see the opportunities offered by ISAR Ednannia. Why did we choose UCU? Because this is the only academic program for non-governmental organizations in Ukraine at the moment. And it indeed does open doors for new knowledge and skills, as well as new connections with other civic organizations. By the way, I did not receive support on the first try — it took me two or three application attempts.

### — What were your expectations of the program and did they prove true?

— I expected to become more proficient in organization management, fundraising, communication — all of them have proven true and even more. I met many people involved in public activities. I got acquainted with their experience; during the course I got very interested in strategic planning, mission, vision, communication strategies, marketing. Before that, I thought marketing was meant for commercial organizations only, so I have changed my perception of public sector. Before that, we were doing many things intuitively without systematic approach and understanding of the future.

### — Do you think NGO representatives have enough opportunities for studying?

— It's hard to say because I am not able to compare, although I can see that many more opportunities are available abroad. Those who seek will find. But compared to other countries,

**just one MARKETPLACE program is not enough for all Ukrainian NGOs.**

### — You spoke mostly of how you personally benefited from the program, but what results did it bring for your organization?

— We are only two years old and do a lot for our organizational development. We have developed an advocacy campaign on climate education and want to engage two interns. We have also developed a communication strategy, defined our target audience, drafted communication plans, and hired a PR specialist. This is not bad for such a short period of time!

## Bukovyna Agency for Personal Development speaks of an NGO maturity and importance of involving external experts



Public activists from Chernivtsi believe that for efficient activity in the non-government sector, it is necessary to continuously search for opportunities to improve different skills. We spoke to Tetiana Lebukhorska, deputy director of the organization, to learn what Bukovyna Agency for Personal Development did to promote its organizational development.

We operate in two key directions. The first is sustainable development, 'green' transport, and high-quality use of public space. The second is public involvement, encouraging public activists and, to some extent, local government bodies and amalgamated communities. Our activities are aimed at our region, but in some cases we act beyond it. As long as the Chernivtsi region is a border region, we cooperate with international organizations as well.

We received three grants from the MARKETPLACE Civil Society Development Platform. The first one covered participation in an event: two representatives of our organization took a course titled "Monitoring and evaluation." Prior to receiving the first grant,

the most memorable part of the process was how we conducted the assessment of organizational capacity

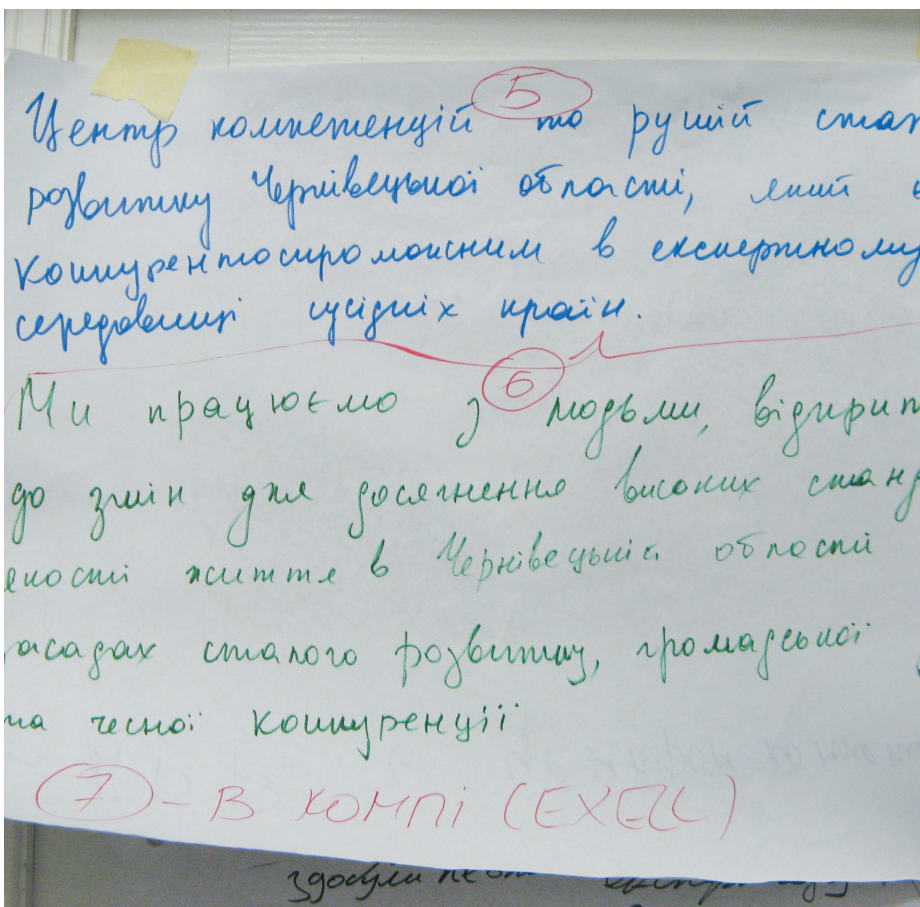
This assessment has broadened our minds: when we finished it, we were able to see many weak points and low level of organizational capacity. It was both difficult and interesting. There were numerous questions that we had never asked ourselves before. So the first-time filling of the form took us a lot of time. We were arguing over the rating: some points were higher, others were lower. On one hand, we didn't want to look as if we are not capable of anything; on the other, you must assess yourself without bias.

The next grant was aimed at covering strategic planning training. We believe this was an important step in our organizational development. Together with the trainer, we tried to look at the organization from outside: what is our place in the city, the region, the country? After it, we have chosen the directions of our activities. The third grant covered an audit of our organization. When we applied for it, we drafted a long list of what we wanted to do: put organizational structure into order; develop a policy covering conflicts of interests; develop a communication policy... We were only supported with the audit. Now I believe

the decision of the grant committee was fair enough: if we want to get a bigger grant, the donor must know that our finances are OK.

In terms of strategy, we had to make an assessment from different points. Finding your directions and goals is important because before that our efforts were chaotic. So it was important to define what we would work with and what would be omitted in order to focus the resources, especially human resources, and efforts. In terms of the audit, we know that public organizations are now scrutinized by the tax authorities like never before. Given that we work with both Ukrainian and international donors, it was important for us to find out whether our books are OK. The process of preparation for the audit was very laborious: the auditor gave us a check-list that we had to prepare, and we drafted some umbrella documents for the first time. I mean we had the basic documents, but we didn't draft umbrella documents too often. The efforts were very intense, but we are happy that the auditor did not make too critical statements regarding our books and accounting. The auditor made some recommendations that we have implemented since, but we are happy not to have made global mistakes that might have led to issues with the tax authorities.

Work is done faster with a trainer from outside. This person does not do your job; he or she is just a moderator—for instance, when disputes arise, as they can arise even when not needed. So the trainer is a moderator. On the other hand, this is a person who can ask questions we would never ask ourselves.



We recommend inviting outside advisers whenever possible.

Poor understanding of organizational development issues means that organizations focus more on operational and short-term matters than on the long-term development vision. It often happens that organizations are not willing to narrow the sphere of their activities in order to meet the needs of their donors. Not all organizations realize the importance of developing strategic or communications plan, but this is an indicator of organization's readiness to work seriously. It's one thing when you act as a group of activists doing cool stuff, and totally different when it's an organization that plans to gain authority — you just can't be unprofessional. We are lucky to have these opportunities in Ukraine to improve professional level of public organizations through the MARKETPLACE Platform. We actively use all of them: grants, webinars, Forums! Join us, do the same!

# ‘Why you need fundraising and strategic planning’ by International Association for Support of Ukraine Charitable Fund



Key activities of the International Association for Support of Ukraine CF are aimed at supporting participants of the anti-terrorist operation (ATO) and members of their families. The fund provides humanitarian aid and helps members of its target audience with rehabilitation. The organization is headquartered in Kyiv and operates throughout Ukraine, but has an international status due to foreign origin of some of its founders (France, Germany, and other European countries).

The support by the Civil Society Development Platform was aimed at attending trainings on fundraising in April-May last year. In late 2016, the organization also received funds for holding a strategic planning and team building session.

Rona Shodzhazada, coordinator of the International Association for Support of Ukraine CF, says the fund’s management realized the need in strategic development back when they were starting. “Our organization is young. We created it in July 2014, and in 2016 we realized that our project activities worked out, but not systemically. Without proper organization of the process, we often had disagreements. So we realized we needed something to enhance our organization’s efficiency. The first step was to find a fundraising strategy to implement our projects. We are a charitable foundation, so we must raise funds and seek for donors all the time.”

The expectations that the organization had of the fundraising training came true, Shodzhazada says. “After the trainings ended, we compiled a database of donors and received valuable information about the instruments of fundraising. The trainer taught us how to use them all in practice.

**After the trainings, we managed to attract support for family rehabilitation and transportation of humanitarian goods**

Our trainer was Ruslan Kraplych, and we recommend inviting him. He used examples to

explain complicated matters as a game during teamwork. We started doing important things right during the trainings without realizing it. These things turned out very important for us later. He also consulted us after the training was over.”

Not only employees and volunteers of the organization took part in the training, but also the recipients of its aid — ATO veterans. “The entire team, the chair of the board, the volunteers.

**At strategic planning session, ATO fighters were also present,**

as some of the best practices were useful for them as well, especially for those who want to start their own public organizations or businesses. We had some difficulties with reaching consensus during the planning because everyone had their own ideas and visions. For that purpose, we allocated several more days after the training to put it all together, and we did it as a calendar plan. It was a finicky job, but an important one because before that, we never had a strategic plan as such,” Rona says.

Coordinator of the International Association for Support of Ukraine says that strategic sessions held by the organization turned out efficient thanks to involvement of outside experts. “We needed help to be guided. We needed to know what strategic directions were there. During the training,

we were taught how to plan risks. We realized that at different stages of planning,

**human factor should be taken into account,**

as things can change. This knowledge is very valuable,” Shodzhazada says.

“In the future, we would like to learn some PR strategies and the art of negotiating. When you have a database developed, you also need to make contacts with new partners. After they are made, you need to support them and develop as partnership relations. PR campaigns are important for carrying out efficient events and projects, as well as for raising additional funds for a project implementation.”

The fund learned about the opportunities offered by the Civil Society Development Platform from an e-mail campaign. “I would like to thank ISAR Ednannia for opportunities they offer to public organizations. I should say that the instructions for grant application and tender processes were described in great detail. Even when we had questions or difficulties, the managers would react quickly. We do not know of any other organization that would do this much for organizational development of charity foundations,” says the coordinator of the International Association for Support of Ukraine.

# How organizational development helps public activists influence local development. Experience from Rivne

**Avtomaidan Rivne public organization works on changing local initiatives. Serhii Zeinalov, one of the activists, told us about their experience of using the opportunities offered by the Civil Society Development Platform.**



## — What does your organization do?

— Many reforms are being currently implemented, so we mostly control the work of law enforcement agencies, we control them and cooperate with them. Another major task is anti-corruption one.

## — Tell us about some projects.

— We rather offer consultations, this is the direction that we've chosen. By the way,

it pays off in the work of patrol police, for instance.

At the moment, the work of patrol officers in Rivne receives the lowest number claims. It is entirely possible that this is achieved thanks to our lawyers who spend a lot of time explaining and working in this direction.

## — How did you use the support by ISAR Ednannia and how did you learn about these opportunities?

— We learned about it from our friends in other cities — Avtomaidans in the Vinnytsia and Odesa regions. They recommended the grant direction for us given that we were interested in local initiatives. We were working on the charter of the territorial community of Rivne. At the moment, we are waiting for amendments to be introduced. Then we have to collect 5,000 signatures and gather an

initiative group of 500 people. Compared to other cities, it was a la-la land, and we decided to change this process without real understanding of how this mechanism works

It was ISAR Ednannia who helped us to find trainers to explain that mechanism to us,

to tell us what to do to introduce amendments to the charter. The draft amendments are being currently elaborated, as there are many details there that need to be changed quickly. We are now working on its fast implementation.

## — Tell us in detail about the training: how did it go, how did you choose trainers, are you happy with the result?

— We are happy with the result. We talked to other public organizations and asked them if they held trainings like this. We had two trainers to choose from, and we are very happy with the result. It's one thing when activists are forced to look for their own conclusions, and a totally different when a professional works with you and explains everything. We held webinars and two sessions.

## — How did the project of organization's evaluation go?

— We didn't face any difficulties.

## — Do you have needs for organizational development now?

— We are interested in our development like never before in order to elaborate, explain and participate in the law enforcement agencies' operation in our city. All of this needs to be hammered home to our activists. If we do engage trainers again, we want to bring results quickly and not to postpone implementation. So far we are trying to make sense of everything on our own. If we fail to, we will seek support from ISAR Ednannia and outside trainers.

## — How do you assess the grant procedure in general?

— We were

pleasantly surprised by simplicity of the cooperation and the speed; we give it five out of five points.

There were no issues, just some minor questions arose.

# What is a good training on teambuilding?



## Dmytro Yakymets, MARKETPLACE Platform provider shares his experience and offers pieces of advice

1

### Understanding the concepts.

Teambuilding is not just about creating a team, but more about understanding what a team is. Sometimes people think of a team that it's a place where members just love each other, share the same values, and work jointly. But this is not enough: it's also important to share responsibilities together and have self-motivation, both for members and volunteers. During teambuilding training, we discuss these concepts in detail so that the teams understand how to work efficiently.

2

### Teambuilding training is just a starting point.

It sometimes happens that people are nice, they have a joint goal and shared values, but as soon as they start implementing a project, their visions differ, they run late, they pass the buck, and there are tasks that no one wants to do. During teambuilding trainings, we try to go deeper into such instances using real life cases.

3

### 3. Listing the members of your team.

Logic says that the entire team should participate in teambuilding training. There are two major models of such trainings. The first is to train leaders to build a team, and those might be leaders of different teams, and the second is to build the team directly. It's good to have people who already work together or have to work together. It's even better to invite people who are real decision makers, who do things, and not just came to fantasize. It often happens that the strategy is great, they invite everyone, they write it down, applause, and a year later I call them or see them and ask "Any success?" and they are like "None." So it's better to invite people who really work together all the time. This is more of a systematization of experience, not its creation.

4

### Defining expectation of results.

It is obvious that after any training, especially after teambuilding, people have these emotions, excitement, desire and readiness to do something. But the bottom line is changes in organizational structure, job responsibilities, instructions depending on how the members see the process. So teambuilding is more of an office party than consultations. But speaking of the bottom line, it might also be crystallization of the organization's structure and amending job responsibilities, and maybe even not the responsibilities but who does what, because participants might approve themselves in non-conventional way.



5

### Get ready for surprises.

Teambuilding trainings might bring side effects when members will do jobs that fit them more by their personal characteristics, not what they do for living. There might be people who work as accountants all the time, but would like to be PR managers in public sector, as public sector is often a place where people can be themselves. Their regular job is a source of income, while public sector allows choosing an organization they like. Here, some surprising and creative combinations might come up, when people who worked in sales, for instance, in public sector would pick unusual function for them, like creation of new projects.

6

### Adapting the training program to management style of the organization.

The structure of the training does not depend on whether the organization operates in business or public sector. It rather depends on the management style. There are, for instance, democratic business structures where team building is made on emotions and motivation, and there are opposite models, when an organization is managed through authority, and everyone looks at the top manager or executive director and wait for his/her decision on how to do this or that task. It does not depend on the sector, business or public, but on the management style. All kinds of management styles can be found in all sectors, as I see. So the training will take this or that path depending on the team's experience.

7

### Training or office party?

Just like any training needs to be preceded by diagnostics, the teambuilding process includes a key question: "Do we work like a team within an organization, or do we work as a department?" There are several principles in teamwork, for instance, independent control, when a team decides independently how to distribute motivation, encouragement, and dynamic leadership. If the structure of the organization operates as a hierarchy, such principle might even create tension because the situation will be different from the real one. So, if the organization does not operate as a team, it will be better to hold an entertaining event, an office party, to have some rest, rather than a teambuilding session. This training is important only if these principles are used later in their work.

8

### Doing everything on time!

As long as the teambuilding session has this side effect in the form of excitement, it is logical to conduct it when the organization has just drafted a strategy, started acting, and faced its first failures. Then the enthusiasm and excitement might die away, so this is the right time to hold a teambuilding session. In terms of the stage of the group's development, it should be implemented between the stage of finger pointing, as the members showed their ambitions, and before they get into cooperation stage. So it should be held when people already have some experience of working together. Speaking of time frames, it should be held between the 3rd and 9th months after the organization started operating; at the beginning of a project; for local organizations, it should be held when the first operational plan is implemented, once in 18 months. Training should be held when the team composition changes dramatically in quantity or quality — then they need this informal process away from mundane activities in order to adapt themselves.

9

### No force should be used.

Lack of desire to build the team might be provoked by previous negative experience of trainings. On the other hand, if there is no desire to develop, then it's about having no desire to work on selected subject, or about wrong audience, or about wrong direction. Then the question is whether this team should be built at all. I advocate voluntary participation. So when the team has no desire to participate, it's better to postpone, reschedule or even cancel the session and not spend the time and effort of participants, trainer and donor.

10

### Using opportunities offered by MARKETPLACE Platform.

Trough MARKETPLACE, organization not only receives funds, but must undertake a self-assessment procedure. Regardless of the grant competition outcome, the self-evaluation process is teambuilding. It stimulates systemic approach within the organization. The grant procedure involves a tender. From my experience, we cooperate not only with organizations that chose us in the tender, but also with other participants. The tender has a list of trainers and organizations that could be involved for other matters. So an organization, even after it chose a trainer, has a pool to cooperate with. On the other side, trainers as experts in public sector get contacts of organizations from across Ukraine and are able to learn more about their activities and further cooperate with them. We met several organizations through MARKETPLACE with which we had joint projects later. It's a chance to receive services and create connections not only within your pool but across Ukraine. It's a huge bonus to all other benefits offered by the Platform!



# “Drafting a strategic plan draws new opportunities for public organizations”, — says “Chernihiv Center for helping people affected by war conflicts.”

The organization has received support for development of strategic vision many times, so it is able to speak of results. Center representative Olha Palkova-Svirchevska told us why developing organizations need to think strategically.

### — What is your organization currently working at?

— In most cases it's education and patriotic upbringing, but we are also involved in producing masking things. Our key target audience is ATO participants and volunteers. We have worked as an initiative group since 2014, and as an officially registered public organization since March 1, 2016. We are mostly active in the Chernihiv region, but we have implemented some projects outside of the region. We learned about ISAR Ednannia at training by Institute Respublica and decided to apply for grant support immediately. In addition to a strategic plan, we also developed fundraising and communication strategies, several provisions to our activities, and a brand book.

### — What were your expectations of the strategic plan development? Did they prove true?

— It was important for us to put it all into a system, because all of us, all of our partners and beneficiaries had their own understanding of where the organization should go. So

it was important for me to define shared understanding of the activities of our organization.

The strategic planning session was attended by the leadership of the organization, its supervisory board, and several volunteers. We have come up with clear understanding of what we will do and decided it would be education.

### — How did the self-assessment process go with the help of the self-evaluation tool?

— The assessment was conducted by the leadership;

there were no difficulties there as the questions are simple.

In some situations we assessed ourselves lower than we could, but we included commentaries explaining why we did it.



### — Why did your organization decide to hold a communication strategy session and had you have any work in progress prior to it?

— Nowork had been done before that. We had

our communications channel, Facebook, and we realized that this channel was dying.

We understood we could not reach our beneficiaries and we had to conduct analysis to be able to contact our beneficiaries and our donors that we chose for the fundraising strategy so that we had some more communication

than just publishing our reports. So the major challenge to hold a communication strategy session was that we lost our communications channel and wanted to find new ones.

### — Not every public organization has a communication strategy...

— I am kind of an idealist, and I believe you cannot go anywhere if you do not know why you're going there and how you'll be implementing it. A communication strategy is required in order to see the market, the audience, and what channels you need to use. We have many organizations that speak of their projects, use different channels actively, and then suddenly find out that

no one in those channels is ready to listen to them.





But the reason is that they haven't analyzed the field they operate in. After I took this training, I pushed my acquaintances to do the same, so that they could analyze how and through whom they can contact with their audience. The same cooperation should be with public organizations who might become their potential partners. The big problem is that many strategies remain ideas: people write something down, but turn it into zero. And later they complain that they have documents, but the result is zero, and this is understandable.

**If you do what you've written down, the results will come.**

I want to say that as soon as we started implementing our strategic plan, the opportunities to implement it started coming up. As soon as we finished drafting the plan, we found a new office premises for the organization, which was one of the top priority goals for us. So I believe these developings are important when they are implemented. There's no sense in developing provisions that you will not use.

**— In the process of developing your fundraising strategy, did you find anything new or decide to change your direction?**

— Before that, we mostly looked at crowdfunding and foreign foundations. After the analysis, we realized that some projects can be funded from local budgets because local authorities are also interested in implementing projects in our sector. So now we're trying to approach it that way. Earlier, we never paid attention to it because usually volunteers kind of do not love local authorities, but after the analysis we realized that local government agencies are just another tool that must be used.



**— What are your plans for organizational development? What do you plan to improve?**

— Honestly,

**we've had significant growth in organizational development,**

so now we just want to implement what we have planned. We would like to hold joint training on efficient operations and develop as a team, so maybe we will draft a grant application for team building. We have realized how this

works, and are now implementing in practice what we wrote down.

**— Do you use other services by the Civil Society Development Platform?**

— I regularly watch webinars recorded. For instance, the most recent

**webinar on social entrepreneurship was very interesting!**

I am interested in anything that might help our activities!





**Olesia Arkhipova of D.O.M4824 public organization from Ivano-Frankivsk has received support from the Civil Society Development Platform to partially cover her enrollment in the Master’s program on Public Organizations Management. The activist told us in an interview why civil sector leaders need education - and how to do it efficiently.**

Our organization has just turned two, and it’s an organization that was created by people who had moved from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Our organization’s mission is to mutually integrate displaced persons and locals. We want to show that

**IDPs are people who can create opportunities in the place where they move to,**

not just use help. We have several directions through which we implement our goal.

I am an accountant by education, and that is not my thing. Before displacement, I worked in other sectors in Donetsk, but when I moved to Ivano-Frankivsk, I had a clear understanding that

**I must do something not for myself only, but also for the community I ended up in.**

As the fighting began, my father said he would defend Ukraine, and he was killed... Before he left, I asked him: “Will you take a weapon in your arms?” And he said: “I know you would take a weapon in your arms too when you will have to defend our land and our people...” So when I arrived here, I had a clear understanding that I no longer want to be in business like I did in my “life before.”

**My weapon now is influencing creation of trust in the society, and relations aimed at open society.**

So that what’s happening in our country now would not continue in the future. I didn’t have any experience of working in the public sector, but I had arguments.

So this is how I ended up at this academic program. It gives access to people who do lecturing — they are usually very interesting people who change attitude of those they teach, who influence their conscience. It is this foundation of values in my academic training. In addition, I learn concrete tools like strategic planning, conducting analysis, legislation aspects, how to make calculations with suppliers, how to draft contracts, amend the charter etc., i.e. the tools that I can use. And the third thing I get from this program is connections with the group you study with. They are 27 people working in the same sector. Although at different directions, but they still have a desire to change things. This is how you forge partnerships. My

**studying in UCU has immediate effect upon the entire organization.**

Right after I finished the class on strategy building, we held a strategic session in the organization. We have developed a flexible plan because we are a young organization, so we drafted a vector plan. After the course on teambuilding, where we learned about composing a job card for each person, we implemented it later within our organization.

Some time ago I was so offended by the events in Donetsk that I thought I would never go back there again. Last January we had a meeting with Krzysztof Stanowski, one of the Polish leaders, in my university in Lviv. And he asked us: “Please tell me, do you know what you will do when Donetsk is liberated? When the lands are liberated by the military, how will you turn people’s heads? How will you work so that the conflict never repeats again? What will you do to unite people again?” This was when I realized that neither I nor people around me have any plan, we do not even try thinking about it. And I realized it was very important. After that I started learning about “hostility language.” In addition, I am now a trainer in civil education —

**it came as a change in my head during a meeting within my education program.”**



## Krok Nazustrich Foundation: “After strategic planning session, our volunteers felt full-fledged team members”

**Krok Nazustrich Charitable Foundation from Sumy received support from the Civil Society Development Platform several times. Its representative Olena Kremer told us how her organization managed to develop an efficient strategy and involve even more activists in its operation**



Krok Nazustrich is a team of likeminded people who seek changes in the sector of civil society development. One of the priority directions for us is development and implementations of innovations in education. The foundation supports people and their desire to learn and grow during their entire life.

When an organization is doing its first steps,

Our foundation has asked for support aimed at the network of public organizations operating in the sector of education for elderly people.

After we received the first grant, we were able to reevaluate our own vision of the foundation’s activities. It hasn’t changed much though, but we broadened the vision of our place within the community,

help, answer a question or just listen to them, because simple enthusiasm, unfortunately, is not enough for doing everything correctly and efficiently. On one hand, we want them to be interested in what they do, on the other — we want the recipients of their help to need it. It was a complicate matter, but we handled it: both managers of this direction and the volunteers realized how to act in certain situations.

Now we see

**help and professional support is very important for it.**

At the beginning, our foundation had to find out where we want to go and how. The first grant application we submitted concerned development of a strategic plan. Professional support by ISAR Ednannia, their openness and responsibility towards partners who are just starting their operations impressed us a lot. It instilled us with enthusiasm to return with another request for support when our Krok Nazustrich foundation started more active cooperation with different groups of population and volunteers. The second grant helped us to support volunteer initiatives more professionally and develop in the sector of project management. The third story of our cooperation with Ednannia team is

**received possibilities to involve more participants to the projects,**

enlarged our target audience, and adapted existing projects. A need arose to create a volunteer database, and develop methods of cooperation with them and introducing innovations in this area. Fundraising became a prerequisite for further existence of the foundation. So a detailed and clear strategy opened a lot of opportunities.

After the strategy was developed, we had to systematize our work with volunteers. The question “How do we work with volunteers?” is always on the table. Krok Nazustrich foundation has a significant volunteer database. About 50 of them are active volunteers — people who participate in our projects at least once a month. Looking back from the three years of our existence, we can say that youth with fiery eyes and desire to do important things must be supported by professionals able to offer timely

**any volunteer as a person at first place, with their own needs, ambitions, social status, and public stance.**

The trainings helped volunteers feel themselves members of the foundation, not just people who are involved in certain projects or activities. They felt they are doing important things together with the organization, create socially important projects. Volunteers have felt they are full-fledged co-creators of the organization, and it mattered both for the foundation and for them.

The team of Krok Nazustrich International Charitable Foundation realized that volunteers are not just enthusiasts but people with their own desires and needs, and that if we take this into account, they will stay with our foundation and our projects for a long time.

**a new level of partnership relations.**

Thanks to organizational development learning, the foundation team increased its professional level. We learned how to draft project applications more professionally, and our volunteers learned how to shape their ideas as projects. The synergy of experience and youth potential allowed us implementing several important projects.



**The euphoria that follows your grant application approval quickly transforms into self-assurance**

It's very good that we are allowed to choose providers on our own. Some might say that we can make a mistake when choosing. Well, we can. But, as I said, we were lucky to have professional trainers. In addition, рення нових заявок.

We learned to choose people by placing tender information on different platforms and analyzing whether a program offered was written for us: did they take our stated needs into the account, did they calculate the need in coffee breaks depending on the audience, did they include handouts, etc. It shows right away whether a person looked into what we do, whether they are ready to take our desires into account to gain the best possible effect from the learning — implementation of goals into operations of the organization.

Representatives of Krok Nazustrich foundation also participated in two.

Learning about experience of other organizations in a prerequisite for own growth. We all realize that unlike business, ideas for successful social projects are not a secret. We definitely used some ideas by others, but given our target audience, the adaptation of idea is often different from the original by 99 percent. In addition, tender information by other organizations, live stories of community foundations, and analytical articles were also very important.

Communication with managers of ISAR Ednannia is another pleasure. When someone asks us about cooperation with Ednannia, we always say:

**every mistake is a new step to self-improvement**

**organizational development forums that ISAR Ednannia holds each fall.**

**“Don't worry! They will explain everything to you!”**

This is the case when they will really explain everything, several times if needed.

**Strategic planning as a start point**



**Strategic planning is vital for any activity: Advice by Dina Volynets for perfect strategic planning**

Any organization, not just a public one, is not able to move forward without a strategy. It only sees what is there today. But to take into account the threats and opportunities contained in the environment, it needs to plan. Strategic planning is one of steps that are needed for sustainable development of either a person or an organization. As I see it, in business it is possible to live without strategic planning, especially in the matter of money: one day you are selling calculators, but as the demand changes, next month you're selling something else. For a business, this has at

least some logic, but it doesn't for public sector: such shifts from one target audience to another (for instance, dealing with disabled people today and with environment tomorrow) is not really systemic.

**Public activity is anyway connected to solving strategically important issues for a civil society, so you cannot act without strategic planning.**



Any activity should start from strategic planning, but its feature is that the strategy must be reviewed at least once a year. So

**it's important when an organization starts doing strategic planning; it's important to start doing it systemically**

An organization that started its activities from developing a strategic plan is a great one, but if it doesn't review it regularly, it makes no sense. This is an ongoing process of planning, correction, and taking turns.

If an organization never held strategic planning sessions before, this process might turn the way it sees its activities and the world upside down. It gives a much broader picture;

**numerous opportunities open up in front of an organization exactly during strategic planning,**

as they are able to see where else they can be useful. It happens that some kind of 'strategic sessions' had been held earlier, but they were for appearances' sake. When I am asked to redo some strategic plans, it often happens that even when the organization used to think globally,

**it was more focused on raising funds on its activities instead of really giving back to the society**

or fulfill their purpose. I use value approach to strategic planning; this is why I pay attention to what is valuable to them. It often happens that organizations then change their focus and direction. In some cases, after they called me to hold a strategic planning sessions, they would close an organization and reopen a new one that would be more value-oriented and do what was important for them from inside, and important for civil society now.

It's important that absolutely all people are present at the strategic planning session who are involved in decision making and responsible for communicating these strategically important decisions to people working in, let's say regions, who later implement them.

**A perfect situation is when the entire organization is present at a strategic planning session.**

As a rule, strategic planning session results in a document that includes description of a strategy and strategic and operation plans. But I believe this is minimum that can be done;

**maximum is a change in how people see their organization**

and complete understanding of where the organization is heading. Usually, everybody is immersed in daily routine and they don't always see the big picture. So the strategic session results in this change of the vision from inside. Another question I always hear is who is supposed to write a strategic plan: organization itself or the consultant/facilitator? I often hear: "We have invited a trainer and expect him or her to write a plan for us." Well, these are inflated demands. A consultant might write a strategy for you, but it would not be the strategy that you see for yourself. In theory,

**organization has to write a plan on its own, and a consultant or facilitator will advise**

what to add. Otherwise it would be his or her vision, not that of the organization.

It should be mentioned that every trainer or facilitator uses his or her own method. There are full-fledged strategic planning lectures where they tell you what to do to draft a strategy, step by step, describe the criteria, and after you listen to it, you go and write your own strategic plan. There are facilitated strategic sessions where they no longer lecture you, but you

have to possess some knowledge. A facilitator just announces what you're going to work on and continues moderating and managing the dynamic of the group in order to avoid conflicts.

If a person never attended such session and doesn't know what it is, the best way to explain is as follows: after a strategic session or during it, a sense of organization's values starts to show up, a sense of its mission and vision, of its interior and exterior environments, and its action plan for the upcoming years. Does it hurt? It usually hurts when an organization realizes that what they've been doing is very narrow, and they should probably do something else.

**People start resisting the change, and it hurts.**

At least 90 percent of civil society organizations of Ukraine had this experience when they developed a plan but wouldn't fulfill it. And this is not necessarily bad! They had planned something, but then it turns out not needed, so they decided to do something else. This is OK. Another story is when you do something totally different from your strategic plan, but the plan and the strategy description are published on your website and positioned as a real plan, and you mention it to your donors, but in fact do something else.

**This might have negative impact on the organization's image.**

Or time will come when you no longer know where to go and will have to draft a plan anyway.

I know of some organizations that had existed for a long time but didn't have a strategic document. Sometimes they have it, but it's in the head of one person. And this one person knows where it's going but hasn't documented it. So when this plan is put on paper, the organization will start moving faster. A written down strategy makes communications much easier and processes within the organization much faster. It's important that a strategy does not say what to do, but says what not to do, and

**in civil sector, it is more important to understand what not to do instead of what should be done!"**

# Working with trainer accelerated organization’s development

**For an organization that is just starting its activities, the process of strategic planning is quite organic. But for a civil organization that has been working for decades, implementing changes is difficult, though crucial for survival. Yurii Trokhymenko, director of AHALAR Center for Humanistic Technologies and a participant of the program by the Civil Society Development Sector, told us why a seasoned organization needs to plan.**

AHALAR City Center for Humanistic Technologies (Chernihiv) deals with implementing informal education, overcoming burnout, supporting social startups, and other important issues in the public sector.

Yurii Trokhymenko told us that his organization has cooperated with ISAR Ednannia for a long time, since 1990s, when they implemented environmental schools together. Having learnt about opportunities for organizational development, AHALAR decided they have to use them: “After 20 years, we had to analyze what we have achieved and where to go next. The process was laborious: several meetings, preparation, a few Skype calls, and then personal meetings. We sat down and analyzed;

Development of strategic plan, Yurii says, will only be efficient when not just one person, but the entire team works on it. “We have a horizontal structure, so we are used to working in the format when all members are involved.”

The results of such teamwork were not long in coming. “After strategic planning, we ended up with two programs we currently work on. To some extent, this is what we had been doing before. After strategic planning, we realized this foundation is our advantage, and we can position all our developments differently,” Trokhymenko says.

The activist is certain that

**in order to hold high-quality planning session, you must not be afraid to involve outside experts.**

“We took this step on purpose — chose a person from outside. It was a joint decision on who to pick. Work with a skilled trainer accelerated our development.”



In addition to developing a strategic plan, the organization received a grant to hold current program audit. “In general, we are happy with the audit, although it required some time. At the end, it gave us understanding of our strengths and weaknesses, and revealed our bottlenecks. I believe

**it was what we needed — to see the organization through someone else’s eyes**

Yurii says.

Trokhymenko urges all public organizations to use opportunities for organizational development more actively. “We recommend ISAR Ednannia to everyone we work with. Especially those who are just starting their projects. On this stage, they need organizational support even more. Above all, I recommend using Civil Society Development Platform,” AHALAR Center leader says.

**we had several options for involving the team into strategic planning. We included everyone, even the accountants.”**

## Opportunities from ISAR Ednannia and even more:



[bit.ly/subscribe-ednannia](https://bit.ly/subscribe-ednannia)

## Like our pages:



[facebook.com/isar.ednannia](https://facebook.com/isar.ednannia)



[facebook.com/cdplatform](https://facebook.com/cdplatform)



## MARKETPLACE

[cd-platform.org](http://cd-platform.org)

This brochure is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the framework of «Ukraine Civil Society Capacity Building Project», implemented by the Initiative Center to Support Social Action Ednannia (ISAR Ednannia). The contents are those of ISAR Ednannia and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.