



Humanitarian Aid
and Civil Protection



TRAINING NEEDS OF NGOs THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE

Report on the findings of the assessment (April 2016)

The assessment has been done at the request of the NGO Forum and has been funded by the ECHO (European commission for humanitarian aid and civil protection). The opinions, conclusions and recommendations provided in the report are those of the authors and compilers of the report and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NGO Forum or ECHO.



Conducted by **ТВОРЧИЙ ЦЕНТР ТЦК**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NGO *	Non-governmental organization
UN	United Nations
CC	Creative Center
IDP	Internally displaced person
ATO	Anti-terrorist operation
PR	Public relations
CSO*	Civil society organization

MM **Mass media**

* these terms are interchangeable

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SUMMARY

In April 2016 the Creative Centre (CC) carried out the assessment due to the request of the NGO Forum for the purpose of analyzing the capacity and needs of NGOs in effective planning and development of programs and trainings for the NGO Forum in Ukraine for the year 2016. The assessment had been carried out of the NGOs that provide support to people affected by the crisis in the east of Ukraine – about 175 organizations from Zaporizhzhya, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including the territories that are not controlled by the Government of Ukraine).

The results of the assessment of the NGOs have identified the following needs

Organizational development of the overwhelming majority of the surveyed organizations is the poor state of operation due to their short period of operation and limited experience in implementation of the programs that are essential for their target groups. The NGOs provide counseling, humanitarian and representational support to displaced persons, children, poor and vulnerable people based on the need in activities that appeared within the past two years. That is why management and *planning* of these organizations are chaotic and spontaneous. The organizations do not have any strategic vision of their work for several years ahead, based on their missions, they almost do not have any operational planning of the activities that would help them work as a single effective mechanism. Planning of the organizations is mainly done on a project-to-project basis.

Some of the organizations have been created only recently and for some period of time have operated on a voluntary basis, that is why they have no experience in *organization management*. Due to absence of proper management, the organizations have problems with decision-making. Absence of corporate culture and lack of experts in the area conflict management lead to conflicts both inside the organization and in their work with their target audiences. The organizations lack effective managers and have no established systems of trainings for staff.

The majority of the organizations that were surveyed pointed out to their lack of *qualified staff and good project managers* as well as no clear vision of targeted work with staff and volunteers both in terms of development of their capacity and team building. Almost all the assessment participants have pointed out the absence of the system of ongoing staff training aimed at their fast response to the current changes. There is not enough funds to hire qualified staff. As a result, a considerable part of the NGOs have mentioned the problem of professional burnout of their staff since they mainly have to work with the representatives of target groups that face highly complicated life situations. Also, there are not enough specialists to provide assistance to the target groups, in particular: psychologists and lawyers to work with IDPs and ATO participants as well as experts to work with youth and people with disabilities.

***Volunteers* constitute the base for the majority of organizations. The surveyed organizations have also pointed out such problems as insufficient knowledge and skills to involve and keep volunteers whose work would be effective. Absence of proper volunteer management leads to the fact that volunteers are not always interested in performing the tasks set by organizations due to the fact that the organizations do not have skills to motivate them.**

Insufficient *funding* and the fact that organizations depend on donors coupled with the lack of experience in their receipt of grants and insufficient level of

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knowledge in *financial management* constitutes the problem for most of the NGOs. The overwhelming majority of organizations has insufficient funding to involve competent employees and arranges zero trainings for their staff and volunteers.

Work with the environment also poses some problems for the majority of the NGOs. The organizations have pointed out both insufficient experience of interacting with authorities and their lack of skills to cooperate efficiently with them. Although donors constitute the main source of funding for NGOs, the organizations do not fully understand how donors operate, why they set certain requirements and insist on compliance with the requirements of funding, etc. The surveyed NGOs would like to work with businesses to attract funds for their activities but they have no experience of communicating and cooperating with them.

Proper internal and external *communications* constitute a challenge for the majority of the NGOs. Almost all the organizations have problems with sharing of information about their activities – they do not prepare annual reports, do not disseminate information about their activities among the target groups, do not efficiently use available channels for sharing of the information (e.g. MM), they do not have web sites, social networks, etc. The surveyed organizations do not have enough experience to communicate with MM to share information about their activities, problems that arise with information sharing, in choosing channels for sharing information and with writing press-announcements and press releases.

Program/project activity – in developing programs and projects the organizations lack writing skills. Some organizations face the problem with correct and clear wording of the problems that they want to solve. When developing programs, not all of the organizations are able to involve authorities to help them solve the problems of target groups while local authorities are not always willing to cooperate with the organizations. While developing programs and projects, the organizations lack project writing skills and skills of communicating with donor organizations. The organizations do not have enough knowledge to conduct project monitoring and assessment. Some of the participants would like to gain income for the activity of their organizations, for instance, with this very purpose they establish a social company, even though they have almost no knowledge on how to establish such a company and how to carry out necessary activities.

Service provision. The main problems in the activities of the NGOs mostly relate to the development of projects and programs for service provision to target group: irrelevance of the programs and projects to the needs of the target group, distrust of target groups to the organizations, insufficient information of target groups about the activities and services of the organizations, absence of high-quality programs for a long-term habitation of IDPs and poor interest and unwillingness of IDPs to undergo trainings, to participate in the events of the organizations, insufficient cooperation with authorities, unwillingness of local authorities to cooperate with public organizations, dependence of organization on funding from donors. In the words of the participants, they try to understand the needs of their clients but they have little experience in doing that – mainly they do telephone surveys, as well as gather information from clients that come to their organization to receive support. Though most organizations have pointed out their close cooperation with their target groups, in reality, there is only a limited number of NGOs out there that actually involve their clients into development of service provision through their programs. There are only few organizations that have mechanisms of quality control of the services that they provide and make their clients satisfied with those

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services, very few organizations conduct monitoring and assessment of their programs and projects.

Civil representation. Representation and advocacy of the interests of target groups are mainly done by the organizations on the basis of communication with the representatives of their target groups. Most organizations do not independently study the problems and interests of the target groups. And though the organizations do some work in legal aid provision to their target groups, but they admit their poor knowledge of legislation and their lack of its understanding, shortage of specialized experts in this area, in particular in relation to their work with ATO participants and IDPs. Planning of civil representation campaigns is lagging behind in majority of the surveyed NGOs, as well as information and awareness-raising events for stakeholder groups that are essential for their performance. As a result, not all organizations have well-established mechanisms of involving target groups in the implementation of their campaigns, performance of monitoring and assessment of the results they achieve. Though many organizations have successful examples of conducting civil representation campaigns, they rarely share information about the work they have done.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the results of the conducted assessment, it is recommended to implement a comprehensive program intended to enhance the NGO capacity. It will consist of the following elements:

1. ***NGO administration and management*** will include the following issues: principles of proper NGO management – participation of the members of the organization, the role of management and functions of the supervisory board; organization management – leadership style and management rules, strategic and operational planning; management and internal control systems; monitoring and assessment; management under the conditions of changes and crisis situations; time management; human resources – work with staff and volunteers; development and training strategies; mentoring and motivation; conflict management; team building.
2. ***Development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of programs and projects*** will include the following issues: project writing; result-based project management; developing the system of project monitoring and assessment; project reporting.
3. ***Financial management*** will include the following issues: funding sources of NGOs; ways of attracting funding – fund raising; fund raising in crisis situations; finance management; principles of financial sustainability and security.
4. ***Communication and cooperation with the external environment*** will include the following issues: communication mechanisms and channels of NGOs; development and holding of PR, information and awareness-raising campaigns; approaches to informing target groups on the activities of NGOs and their mobilization with a view to cooperating with NGOs; special features of the activities of authorities in Ukraine and mechanisms of cooperation between NGOs and authorities; interests of the business and ways of motivating it to cooperate with NGOs; efficient cooperation of NGOs with MM. Preparation of press releases and press announcements; negotiation holding.
5. ***Provision of services and conducting civil representation campaigns***
 - ✓ Service provision – study of the needs of target groups, development of services to meet clients' needs; system of client and service accounting; assessment of the quality of services and level of clients' satisfaction; cost reimbursement; cooperation with authorities.

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- ✓ Civil representation – collecting information and studying the issues important for communities; determining the NGOs' standpoint; involving tangible and financial resources for conducting campaigns; informing and mobilizing the public to advocate the elaborated standpoint; developing the campaign implementation action plan; forming and working in coalitions; monitoring the campaign implementation and result assessment; reviewing the standpoint on the basis of the results of monitoring and assessment;
- ✓ Accountability of NGOs – preparing annual accounts and activity reports;
- ✓ Ethical grounds for the activities of NGOs.

6. Social entrepreneurship

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INTRODUCTION

The NGO Forum was set up in Ukraine in autumn 2014 as an organization that both Ukrainian and international NGOs providing humanitarian assistance and assistance in restoration of Ukraine may accede to. The tasks of the NGO Forum are as follows:

- ❑ Facilitating the discussion on the operating level among actors involved in solving the issues of crisis in Ukraine. The issues to be discussed include: access, local security, synergy and duplication, political issues of program implementation etc.;
- ❑ Exchanging information regarding open discussions and influencing the capacity of agencies to solve urgent issues, for example, registration, legislation, coordination, funding;
- ❑ Building capacity of international and national organizations via seminars and trainings;
- ❑ Implementing civil representation campaigns on behalf of the NGOs in relation to approved strategic and urgent problems of the humanitarian sphere.

The NGO Forum cooperates with Ukrainian and international NGOs and non-conventional humanitarian institutions, including agencies, departments and offices of the UN and the Government of Ukraine. The NGO Forum also cooperates with all available coordination mechanisms in Ukraine.

One of the key directions of the NGO Forum's activities in 2016 is enhancing capacity of local NGOs and stimulating transition from humanitarian activity to restoration and development projects. That is why the present assessment was aimed at analyzing the capacity and needs of NGOs for correct planning of development and training program for 2016. This report contains the assessment results.

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I. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

1.1. The Goal and Tasks of the Assessment

The goal was to analyze the capacity and needs of the NGOs for correct planning of the development and training program of the NGO Forum in Ukraine for 2016.

Assessment tasks:

1. To develop the methodology of NGOs' capacity assessment;
2. To make assessment of the capacity and needs of the NGOs;
3. To analyze the results of assessment and to prepare a report

Project deadline: April - May 2016

1.2. Participants of the Assessment

NGOs helping people affected by the crisis in the east of Ukraine – about 200 organizations from Zaporizhzhya, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including the territories not controlled by the Government of Ukraine).

1.3. Assessment methodology consisted of:

- ✓ Online-survey. A questionnaire was developed and approved by the National Coordinator of the NGO Forum;
- ✓ Focus group discussion. A guide was developed and the venue for 5 focus groups was determined in coordination with the NGO Forum.

1.4. Assessment Organization

Assessment was carried out in three stages.

1. Preparatory stage

- 1.1. The NGO Forum has provided contacts of network members and provided support in organizing the assessment (notices on the need to participate in the assessment (online survey and focus groups), invitation of participants to focus groups etc.).
- 1.2. The CC has developed a questionnaire for online-survey and a guide for focus groups, and the NGO Forum has approved them (Annexes 3 - 4).

2. Field stage

- 2.1. Online-questionnaire developed
- 2.2. Addresses of the NGOs determined and invitations for them to participate in the survey sent;
- 2.3. 5 focus groups prepared and conducted with members of the NGO Forum in Kyiv, Mariupol, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Slovyansk.

3. Data analysis and report preparation stage

- 3.1. Accumulation of the survey data in the Excel database (Annex 1);
- 3.2. Analysis of the survey results and report preparation.

1.5. Assessment restrictions

While carrying out the assessment, the researchers faced a range of restrictions.

- ✓ Time for the assessment was limited which led to not all NGOs whose contacts were provided participating in the survey.
- ✓ Since the assessment was carried out within a limited period and the online-survey was the main method, absence and/or wrong e-mail addresses of many NGOs did not allow us to involve all the members of the coalition in the assessment. To mitigate the consequences of such restriction, members of the Forum were notified about the assessment via social networks, while organizations without e-mail addresses were invited to participate in focus

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group discussions.

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II. RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT

2.1. Assessment Participants

According to the database of the NGO Forum, 175 organizations from seven regions of Ukraine and territories not controlled by the Government of Ukraine (NGCA) were to participate in the survey. E-mail addresses were identified for 125 out of 175 organizations. Table 1 represents the number of Forum participants and the number of assessment participants (online survey and focus groups) by regions.

Table 1. Number of Assessment Participants by Regions

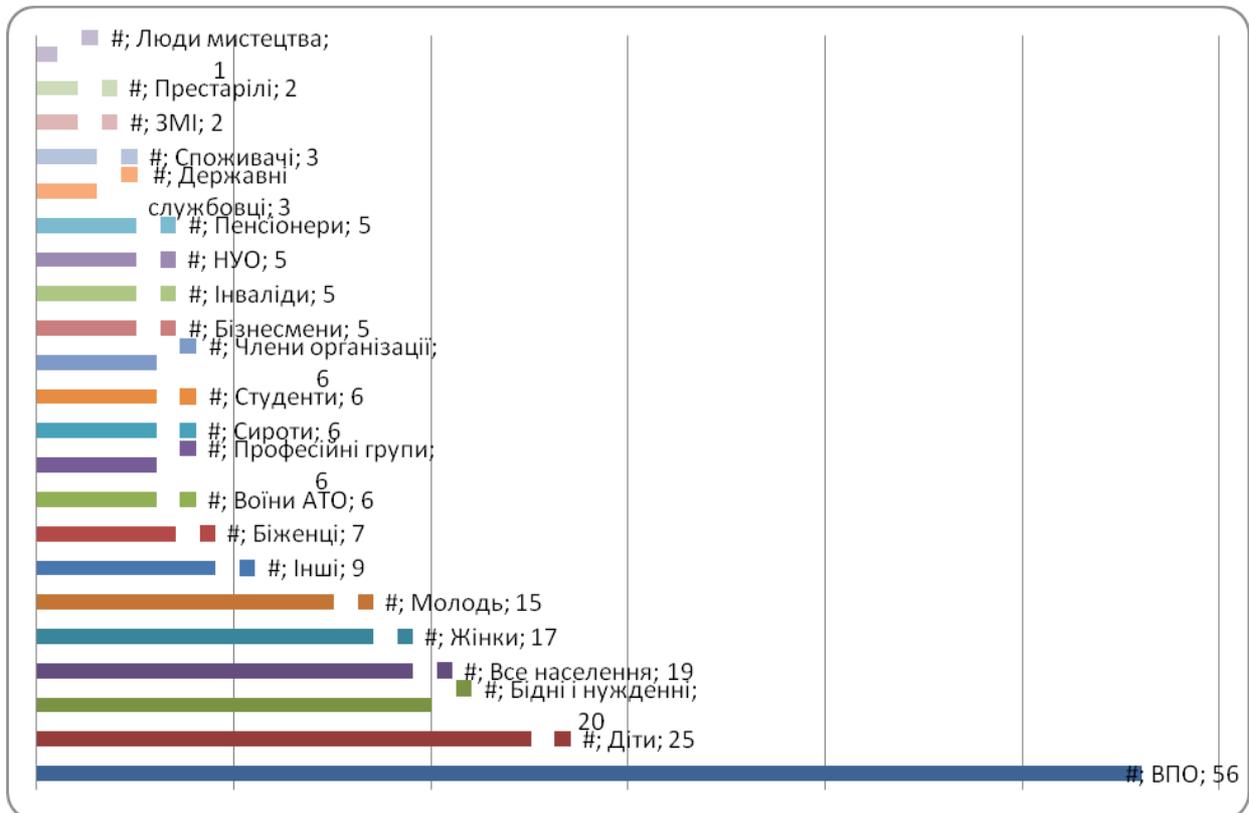
N o.	Oblast/Region	Number of members	Number of e-mail addresses/wrong addresses	Number of respondents – online surveys	Number of respondents – focus groups
1	Kyiv	24	19	16	5
2	Kharkiv	8	6	11	11
3	Donetsk	52	34	25	24
4	Luhansk	38	11	6	
5	Dnipropetrovsk	9	7	7	8
6	Zaporizhzhya	7	6	4	
7	Western Ukraine	6	5	8	
8	NGCA	30	20	5	
	Unkown			2	
	TOTAL	175	125	84	48

Only 24 organizations indicated the year of their foundation – from 1993 to 2016. Ten out of those organizations were set up during 2014-2016. The majority (69%) of the organizations participating in the online survey are civil organizations, while 26% are charity organizations, which corresponds to the ration of registered civil and charity organizations across Ukraine.

Participants of the online survey had to select three sectors of activity of their organizations from the provided list of sectors and up to three types of activities and clients of their organizations. The respondents could also indicate their own answers if the necessary variant was missing. The answers to those three questions are provided in Figures 1-3.

Figure 1. Sectors of NGOs' Activity (N=84)

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The analysis of the organizations which are members of the NFO Forum and participated in the survey (48% of all NGOs or 68% of the organizations with an e-mail address) shows that the spheres, types of activities and target groups correspond to the above four tasks of the Forum. Although solving social issues and rendering social services are no clearly defined tasks of the Forum's activity, the analysis of the coalition members' needs was performed according to two major functions of the NGOs, that is provision of services (and not only social ones) and civil representation (protection and representation of interests).

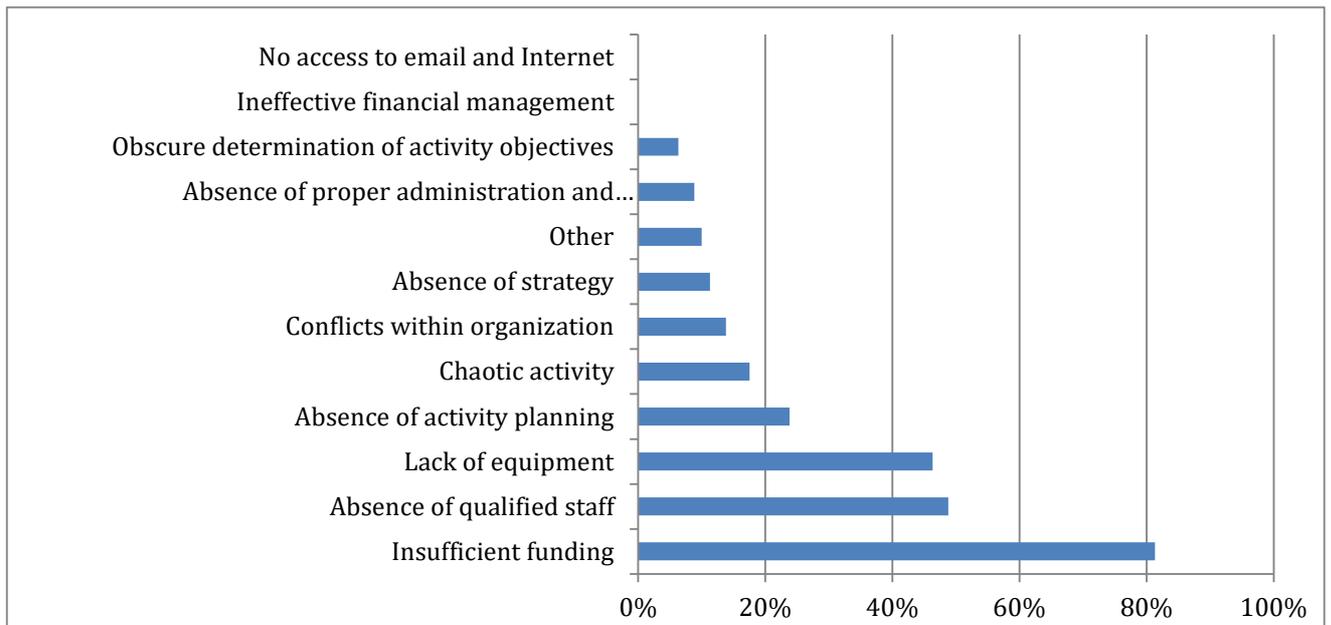
2.2. Internal and External Problems of the NGOs

For better understanding of the topics and issues of future trainings, it was important to clarify the external and internal challenges that the Forum's members are facing. Both respondents of the online survey and participants of focus group discussions were asked to specify the problematic spheres of activity of their organizations.

As for the **internal problems** (Figure 4), the overwhelming majority of respondents of the online survey (81%) mentioned the insufficient funding which is a very serious challenge and often results in the absence of proper administration and management of the organizations. The organizations themselves specified that the absence of qualified staff in 49% of the NGOs, lack of equipment (46% of the organizations), absence of activity planning (24%), including absence of strategy (11%), chaotic activity in 18% of the organizations, which often leads to conflicts in 14% of the organizations, are the challenges that restrain both sustainable work of the NGOs and their development.

Figure 4. Internal Problems of the NGOs (N=80).

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The answers of focus group participants did not differ from the results of the online survey and provided a better understanding of the organization management problems – .

Absence of qualified staff is related to the fact that mainly volunteers work in the organizations: “We do not have permanent staff, we mainly work on volunteering principles”, “The grant aid is mainly spent on the main activity, while staff members work on volunteering principles, therefore it is complicated to involve staff in project implementation”² and “The organization was set up on the volunteers’ initiative, that is why we lack knowledge in organization management, well-trained staff for task accomplishment”³.

Volunteers’ work is not organized – “Absence of a manager for volunteers who would work with people to motivate and support them” **and, as the result there appear** “Problems with volunteers since volunteers cannot and do not want to work for a long period, there is no internal discipline among volunteers”⁴ because of “Not very serious attitude of volunteers towards work – “I can do my work or not do it”⁵. In addition to the lack of skills of arranging the volunteers’ work, the organizations face the “problem of finding volunteers who would be responsible about their work. Volunteers are not always interested in performing the set tasks, motivation volunteers lack motivation”⁶.

Poor skills of **strategic and operational planning** of the organizations’ activity are related to “Insufficient professionalism of members and volunteers of the organization, low level of knowledge on strategic planning”⁷ and to the absence of “the written strategic plan, therefore

1 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

2 Ibid

3 Slovyansk Focus Group

4 Kyiv Focus Group

5 Ibid

6 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

7 Kyiv Focus Group

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*activity takes place in a spontaneous chaotic way, and that always hinders an effective operation*⁸.

Poor **organization management** is explained as “*poor skills of crisis situations management, project management*”⁹; lack of “*good managers in the organization*”¹⁰ and absence of “*financial management specialists*”¹¹, which is the result of “*insufficient funding for involving specialists*”¹²; “*poor knowledge on program development, financial reporting*”¹³; “*absence of feedback culture of staff and corporate culture, chaotic organization activities*”¹⁴; the need to have enough time for decision-making and insufficient number of people in the organization¹⁵; “*insufficient communication in the organization. The organization carries out its activities in several directions which work in a closed way and do not share information*”¹⁶.

Furthermore, the respondents mentioned the **specific skills** the organizations need to work better. These are, in particular, skills of “*managing conflicts when working with clients and inside the organization*”¹⁷; “*fund raising, in particular, in crisis situations*”¹⁸; “*organization’s site development*”¹⁹; “*preparation of annual reports for different target groups*”²⁰; responding to changes in the society²¹; preparing letters and answering them²². As the result of absence of knowledge and skills the organizations ascertain the “*emotional burnout of staff since they have to work with complicated target groups*”²³.

- ✓ In addition to internal problems, the NGOs pointed out a number of **external challenges** (Figure 5), including:

8 Slovyansk Focus Group

9 Ibid

10 Kharkiv Focus Group

11 Ibid

12 Ibid

13 Kyiv Focus Group

14 Kyiv Focus Group

15 Ibid

16 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

17 Kharkiv Focus Group

18 Slovyansk Focus Group

19 Ibid

20 Ibid

21 Ibid

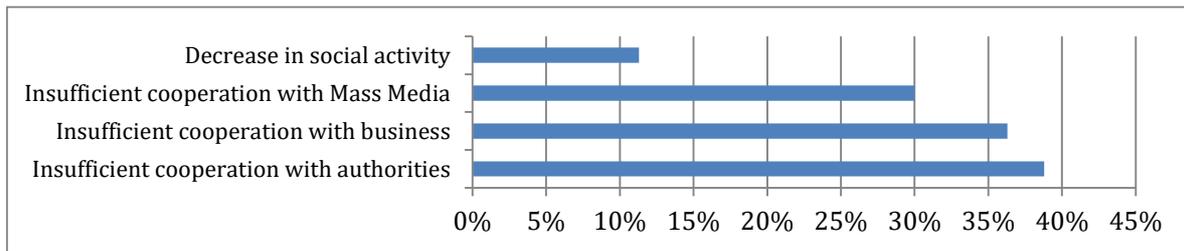
22 Kyiv Focus Group

23 Slovyansk Focus Group

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- ✓ Insufficient cooperation with MM since “*there is no experience of communicating with MM, we do a lot, but we do not spread information about our activities. There are problems when submitting information, selecting information channels. It is important to be literate in writing press announcements and press releases, as well as to build correctly the relations with MM*”²⁴;
- ✓ Insufficient cooperation with authorities since the NGOs think that “*the authorities do not change and it is difficult to work with them, the services of the authorities are limited to job descriptions*”²⁵;
- ✓ Decrease in social activity²⁶;
- ✓ Difficulties in communication between the regions and Kyiv²⁷.

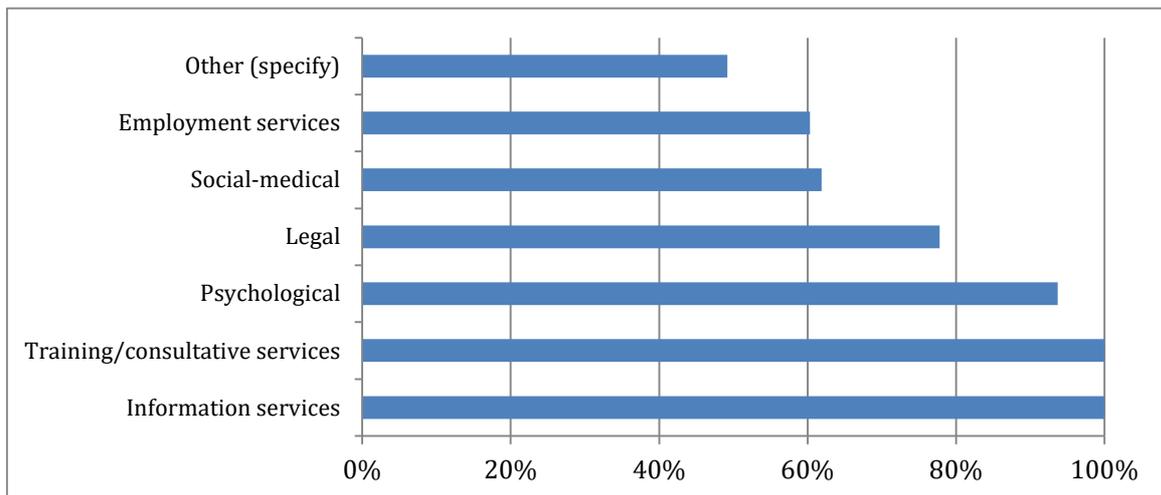
Figure 5. External Problems of the NGOs, (N=80).



2.3. Service Provision

Although the service provision is not among the main tasks of the NGO Forum but the skill of rendering services constitutes one of the two important functions of civil society organizations. 79% or 63 surveyed organizations – participants of the online survey – indicated the service provision to its members and/or target groups as the direction of their organizations’ activities. The list of services provided to the surveyed NGOs suggested in the questionnaires is taken from the *Social Services Act of Ukraine*.

Figure 6. Types of Services provided by NGO Forum’s Members, (N=63)



24 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

25 Kyiv Focus Group

26 Ibid

27 Ibid

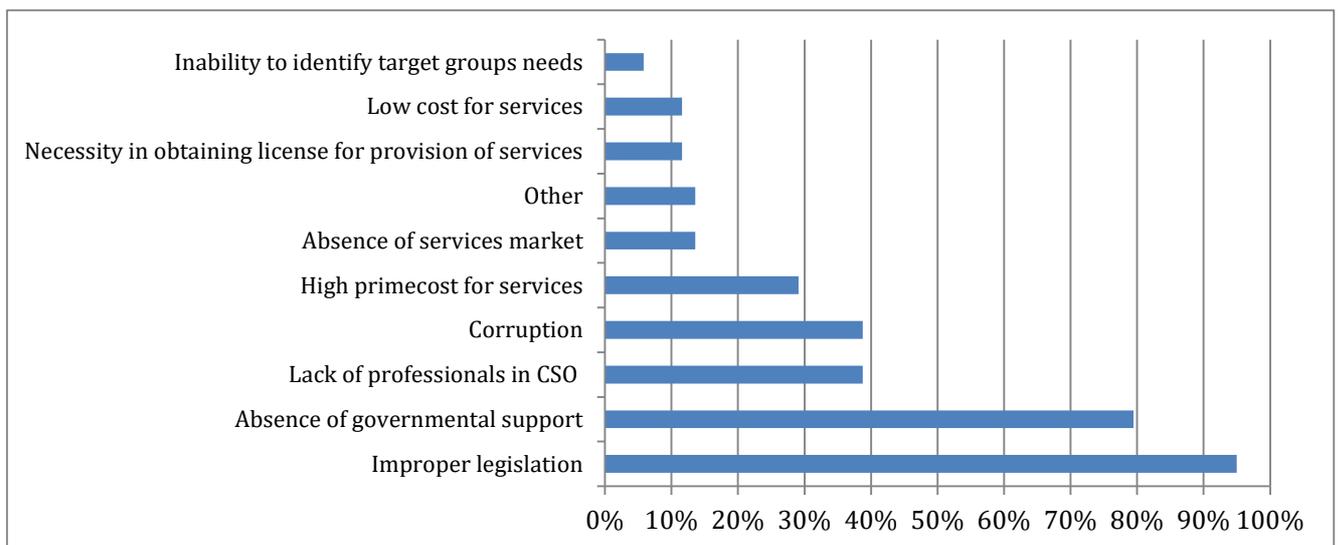
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Training and consultative services are provided by the organizations mainly to IDPs (42% of organizations), all groups of the population (11.3% of the NGOs), youth (10%) and children (8%). IDPs (55% of the organizations deliver such services) and children (15% members of the coalition) are the receivers of psychological services, and only 6% of the organizations provide these services to women, and 4% of the organizations deal with psychological needs of orphans, youth and all groups of the population. 32% of the NGOs provide social and medical services to IDPs, 13% of the organizations – to poor and vulnerable people, and 5% take care of the elderly and disabled people. ATO participants are provided social and medical services by only about 3% of the NGOs. 51% of the NGOs render legal services to IDPs. Approximately 9% of the organizations provide consultations in legal issues to youth and all groups of the population, while 6% provide assistance to the members of the organization. The services of IDPs and youth employment are the activity of 55% and 13% organizations, correspondingly. The receivers of information services are IDPs (35% of the organizations provide them), all groups of the populations (26%) and women (7%).

The surveyed organizations choose different strategies of providing service to their target groups, including simple service provision, improvement of services and influence on the government. 60% and 87% of the surveyed organizations, accordingly, are engaged in rendering services aimed at meeting the needs of the target groups and implementing programs with a wide range of services. 50% to 82% of surveyed organizations are engaged in improving services which includes studying the citizens' interests and needs in services, expanding the range of services (extending the list thereof), increasing the scope of services, expanding the geography of services and improving the quality of services. Two thirds of the surveyed organizations deal with influence on the government, in particular representation and protection of citizens' interests with regard to services; monitoring of state services. 41% of the respondents is involved in assessing the quality of state services. While the influence on the state policy at the local level in relation to services was indicated by 42% of the surveyed organizations, the influence on state policy at the national level in relation to services was specified only by 28% of the NGOs. At the same time, it should be noted that not all surveyed organizations register their clients (92% of the NGOs register clients), have mechanisms of controlling the quality of their services (78% have a proper mechanism) and get feedback as to the level of client satisfaction with the services received (86% of the NGOs get feedback from their clients).

The NGOs were asked what problems they face when providing services to their target groups. The results of the online survey are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Obstacles for Services Provision that NGOs Are Facing, (N=63)



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The analysis of focus group discussions regarding the problems in service provision has shown the following.

Although 95% of the surveyed NGOs named the improper legislation as one of the most serious impediments for service provision, nobody mentioned this problem during focus group discussions.

As far as the **state support of the NGOs in service provision** is concerned, the focus group participants mentioned “*problems in communicating with the authorities*”²⁸ and that they “*do not always manage to work in tandem with the authorities*”²⁹. The NGOs see “*distrust of the target group to the authorities*”³⁰ as a reason for NGOs having to work with the target groups. The representatives of the NGOs said that “*when we start working with the authorities, we realize that we have a different vision of one and the same problem*”³¹ and mentioned unwillingness of “*the authorities to cooperate with us (NGOs) in solving the problems of our target group*”³². As the result, organizations find it “*difficult to involve them (the authorities) in their activities and to solve problems*”³³. Furthermore, the organizations surveyed found out that unwillingness of the local authorities to cooperate with public organizations was explained the fact that the “*authorities perceive NGOs as rivals and as civil control*”³⁴.

The Forum representatives pointed out the **lack of specialists and specific skills** in their organizations. Focus group participants said that they lacked “*psychologists and lawyers who could work and provide legal services to IDPs and ATO participants*”³⁵ and simply qualified specialists for project implementation³⁶. The skills necessary for service provision named by the Forum members were “*problems with communication, in particular, insufficient interaction with MM leading to the situation when the target audience does not know about the services provided by the organizations*”³⁷; “*poor skills of communicating with donors with a view to informing them about our problems. Their requirements for project writing are not always clear*”³⁸; “*it is difficult to communicate with businesses and to involve their funds for project activities*”³⁹; “*problem with writing a high-quality project application, insufficient cooperation with donor organizations*”⁴⁰; “*we face problems with a correct and clear formulation of a problem to be solved*”⁴¹; “*insufficient skills for working with people with disabilities for the purpose of their adjustment in the society; lack knowledge of how to perform monitoring and assessment*”⁴². The

28Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

29 Slovyansk Focus Group

30 Kyiv Focus Group

31 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

32 Slovyansk Focus Group

33 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

34 Kharkiv Focus Group

35 Slovyansk Focus Group

36 Mariupol Focus Group

37 Kyiv Focus Group

38Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

39 Ibid

40 Mariupol Focus Group

41 Slovyansk Focus Group

42 Ibid

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organizations indicated that they “*need to be aware of how to help their clients with employment*”⁴³ and the NGOs “*would be willing to earn money on their own, for example, to set up a social company but they have little information on how to set it up and how a social company functions*”⁴⁴. Focus group participants also specified that they “*mainly work with humanitarian aid, while they would like to solve other problems of the target group, but they do not have enough knowledge and experience in project writing and attraction of funds*”⁴⁵.

The NGOs explain their inability to **convey information** on their services to the population by the fact that “*the target group is always waiting to go back home soon*”⁴⁶; “*by the absence of the Internet and inability of the target group representatives to use it*”⁴⁷; “*problems with communication, in particular, insufficient interaction with MM*”⁴⁸; “*reduction of the target audience and changes of their needs*”⁴⁹.

A small number of the online survey respondents pointed to their inability to **determine the needs** of their target groups in services. Discussion with the focus group participants showed that the Forum members know the needs of IDPs and they are concerned with “*absence of high-quality programs for a long-term staying of IDPs*” and the fact that “*IDPs do not have a chance of self-fulfillment in rural areas*” and “*in small towns there are no jobs for IDPs*”. At the same time, they mention “*a low level of interest and unwillingness of IDPs to study at trainings and participate in the organization’s events*”⁵⁰.

In focus group discussions, the participants drew attention to the **obstacles** in cooperation with donors and the business. Obstacles in cooperation with donors are seen by the participants of the discussion in Kyiv in:

- ✓ *Changing priorities of donor organizations, thus one has to be flexible in service provision, as well short-term projects, lasting mostly 6 months;*
- ✓ *Their dependence on donor organizations’ funding;*
- ✓ *Complexities in attracting donor’s funds*
- ✓ *Provision of small scope of grant funding by donors;*
- ✓ *Problem with involving funding for children-orphans from donor organizations as well as miserable amounts of funding which do not cover all the costs.*

As for the lack of interest of the business in supporting the NGOs’ activities, the participants of discussions explained it by the fact that “*the business does not see any advantage in providing material aid to those in need since they do not have any benefits at the legislative level*”⁵¹ and therefore “*the local business is reluctant to give money to projects*”⁵².

2.4. Civil Representation Campaigns

43 Ibid

44 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

45 Slovyansk Focus Group

46 Kharkiv Focus Group

47 Kyiv Focus Group

48 Ibid

49 Ibid

50 Kharkiv Focus Group

51 Dnipropetrovsk Focus Group

52 Kyiv Focus Group

TRAINING NEEDS OF NGOs

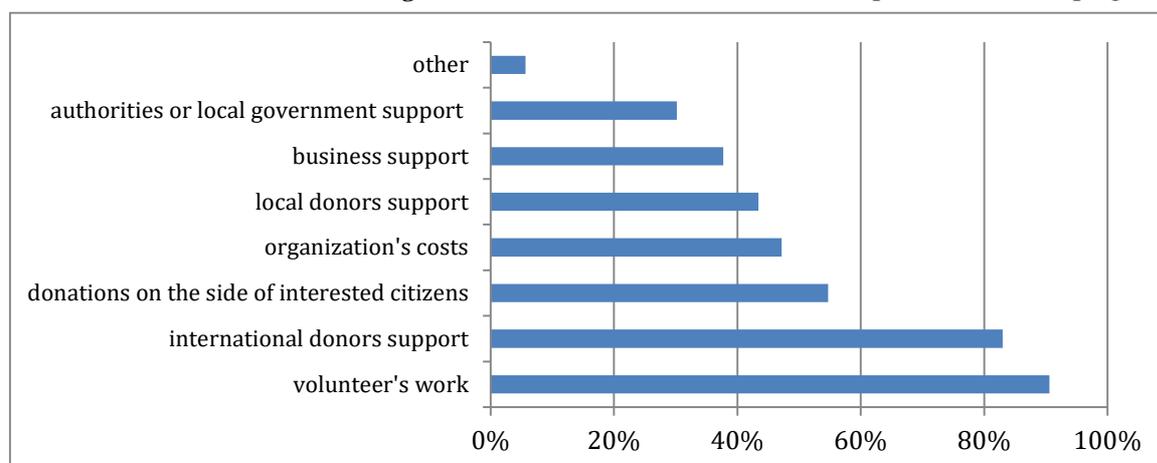
One of the tasks of the NGO Forum is to conduct campaigns of civil representation on approved strategic and urgent humanitarian issues. That is why the assessment traced how many NGOs deal with civil representation and how they themselves rate the level of their knowledge and skills in the issues of representation and protection of the interests of their target services. Out of 84 participants of the online survey 53 NGOs (or 63%) have indicated that civil representation is the determining activity of their organizations. The level of NGOs' capacity in conducting civil representation campaigns was assessed by the organizations themselves in correspondence with the stages and steps of such campaigns. The results of analysis of online questionnaires are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. The level of NGOs' capacity in the issues of civil representation, (N=53)

	Stage/step	Yes	No	I don't know
Preparatory stage				
1	Does your CSO collect information and study the issue prior to developing and conducting civil representation campaign?	84%	9%	7%
2	Does your CSO develop a written plan of the civil representation campaign?	61%	35%	4%
3	Does your CSO have consultations with the public in order to get comments and recommendations prior to the civil representation campaign?	78%	21%	2%
4	Are the comments and recommendations of public followed by any changes in the strategy and plan of civil representation?	87%	11%	2%
Implementation of campaign and mobilization of supporters				
5	Does your CSO hold information campaigns to support the developed civil representation campaign?	81%	17%	2%
6	Does your CSO form and participate in the coalition and networks of CSOs for civil representation campaigns?	74%	23%	3%
7	Does your CSO develop a communication plan of the civil representation campaign?	54%	37%	9%
8	Do you mobilize the public to implement a civil representation campaign?	87%	13%	-
Monitoring and assessment of the campaign				
9	Does your CSO hold monitoring of civil representation campaign implementation?	64%	32%	4%
10	Does your CSO review the approach towards the civil representation campaign implementation on the basis of the campaign results?	72%	16%	12%

Besides the questions provided above, the respondents have given answers about the resources they use for a civil representation campaign. The results are provided in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Sources of resources for civil representation campaigns, (N=53)

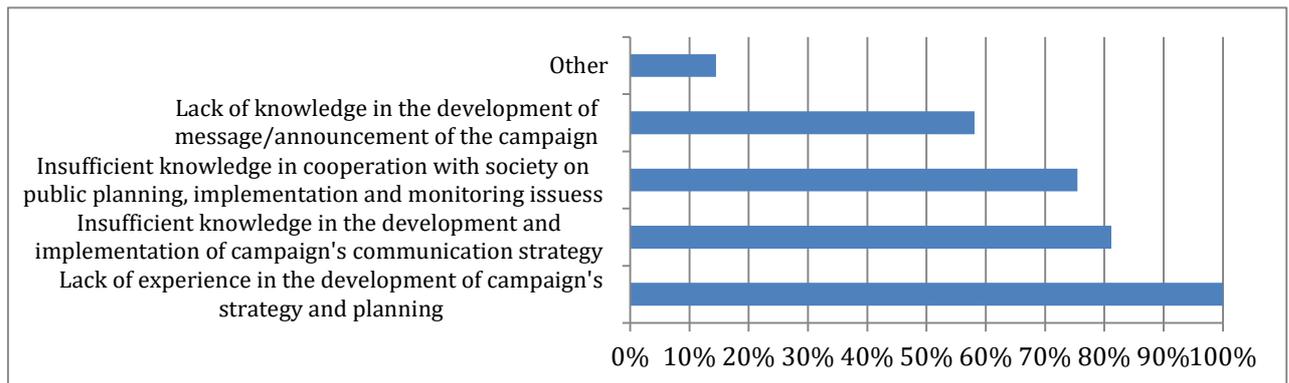


It is interesting that besides traditional support provided by international donors, volunteers' work and support on the side of citizens out of their pockets constitute the largest sources of NGOs support in civil representation campaigns.

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Also, the NGOs were asked about the challenges they face while holding civil representation campaigns. The results of the online survey are provided in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Challenges of NGOs in conducting civil representation campaigns, (N=53)



Comparison of the results of NGO's self-assessment of their capacity to hold civil representation campaigns (provided in Table 9) and the above problems shows that development of the strategy/detailed plan of the campaign, development and implementation of the communication strategy and monitoring of the implementation and assessment of the results of the civil representation campaign are the least developed NGOs' capacities.

Participants of focus groups in five cities from the east of Ukraine have pointed to the following challenges and problems faced in the course of implementation of civil representation campaigns at different stages.

Preparatory stage of campaign implementation

- ✓ *Insufficient skills of studying the needs of target groups. We mainly get information about the needs of the target group from people resorting to us for help.*
- ✓ *The activity is carried out in a spontaneous way depending on the appearing problems.*
- ✓ *Field work with the target group in communities takes place only via SSC, which are not always eager to cooperate, do not provide information about clients' contact details;*
- ✓ *The target group does not always know about its rights secured by the state;*
- ✓ *The most serious problem in advocating the interests is lack of knowledge of legislation;*
- ✓ *The problem of access to information (work with military men);*
- ✓ *Currently we work with raions of the region, so in order to know the needs of the target group we need resources to invite specialists.*
- ✓ *The problem is that clients do not want to provide information, do not want to talk.*

Campaign implementation

- ✓ *There is no efficient feedback mechanism established with the target groups.*
- ✓ *We do not sufficiently disseminate information about the activity of the organization. There are many success stories in our activities, but we do not share them.*
- ✓ *Lawyers of the organization provide pro bono aid but the court fee for IDPs is UAH 551.21, currently state does not reimburse the costs.*
- ✓ *Due to the problem of sharing information, the target group is unaware of the services provided by the organization;*
- ✓ *Quite often there are problems with lobbying the interests of the target group and namely unwillingness of the authorities to cooperate;*
- ✓ *Complications in cooperation with the authorities due to a monopolistic nature of local authorities;*
- ✓ *Unwillingness of local authorities to listen to NGOs, currently there is opposition between the authorities and civil society.*

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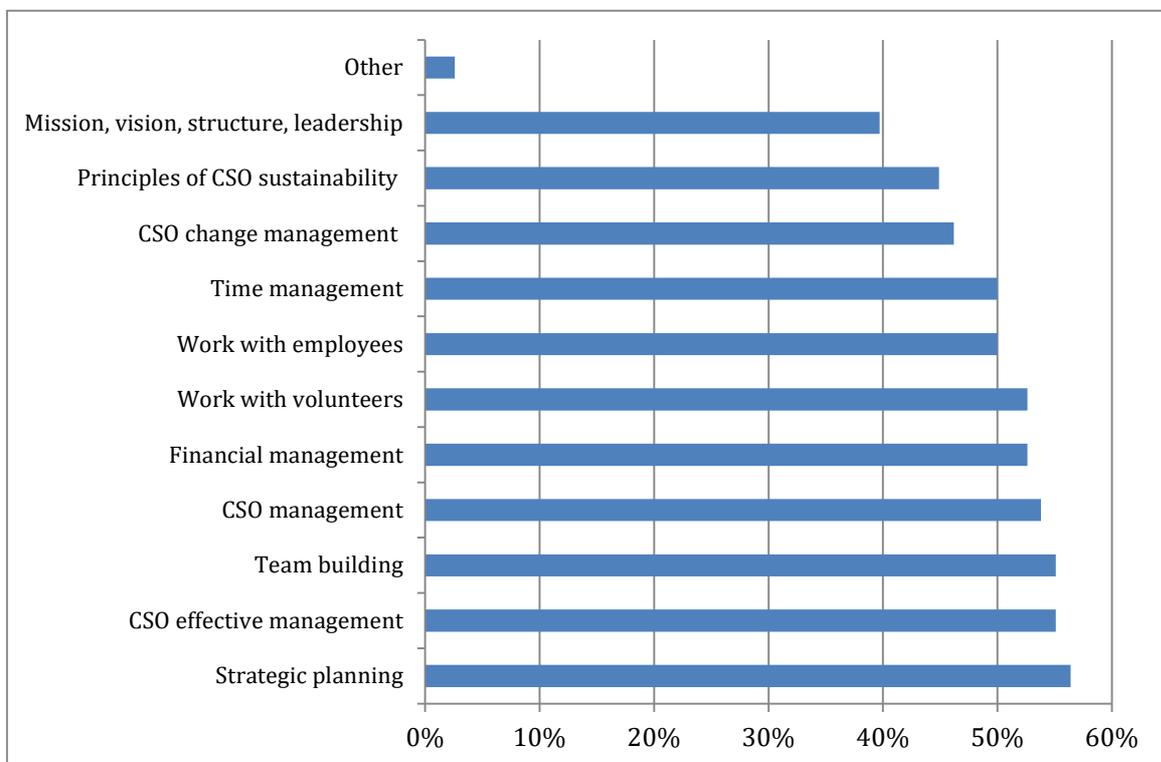
In addition to the opinions of the online survey respondents, participants of focus group discussions have pointed out the challenges pertaining to access to their target groups and information about their needs; poor knowledge of legislation by both the NGOs themselves, and the target groups; challenges related to cooperation with the authorities and poor dissemination of the successful experience of NGOs in conducting civil representation campaigns.

2.5. Training Needs

To assess the training needs the survey participants were offered a couple of thematic blocks, more specifically: organization management; project development and management; reporting, monitoring and assessment; communications; cooperation with authorities and local self-government bodies; civil representation; service provision; peace building, conflict resolution, mediation; human rights and other topics. The results of the online survey and focus group discussions are provided below in the figures and description texts desegregated by the topics.

Organization Management

Figure 10. NGOs' Training Needs in Organization Management (N =80)



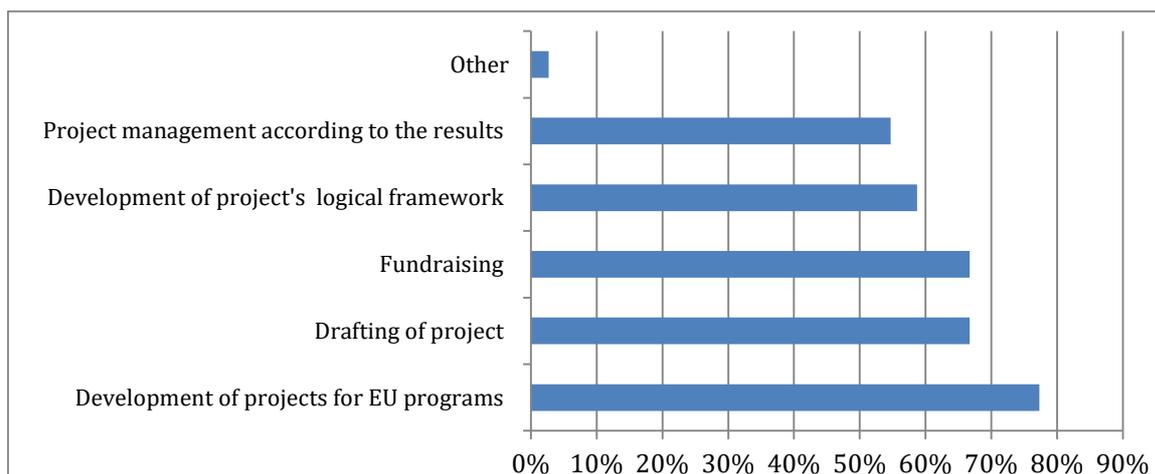
In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have indicated the following ones:

- ✓ organization's activity planning under the conditions of permanent changes;
- ✓ change management;
- ✓ training of the organization's own managers;
- ✓ organization management;
- ✓ psychological trainings for volunteers and employees (stress resistance, burnout, psychological trauma);
- ✓ mediation;
- ✓ financial literacy, correct "reading" of the city budget, getting clear about its financial flows.

Project Development and Management

Figure 11. NGOs' Training Needs in Project Design and Management, (N=80)

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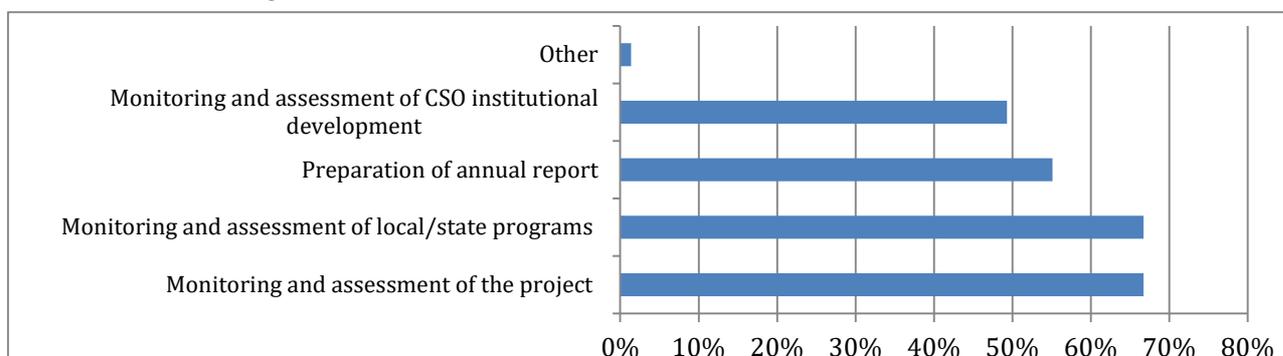


In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ management of projects related to working with children;
- ✓ fund raising under the conditions of real permanent changes;
- ✓ local fund raising and cooperation with local business;
- ✓ peculiarities of developing programs for the target group in large cities and small communities;
- ✓ study of the target audience needs;
- ✓ study of the IDPs needs, work with the target audience.

Reporting, Monitoring and Assessment

Figure 12. NGOs' Training Needs in Reporting, Monitoring and Assessment, (N=80)



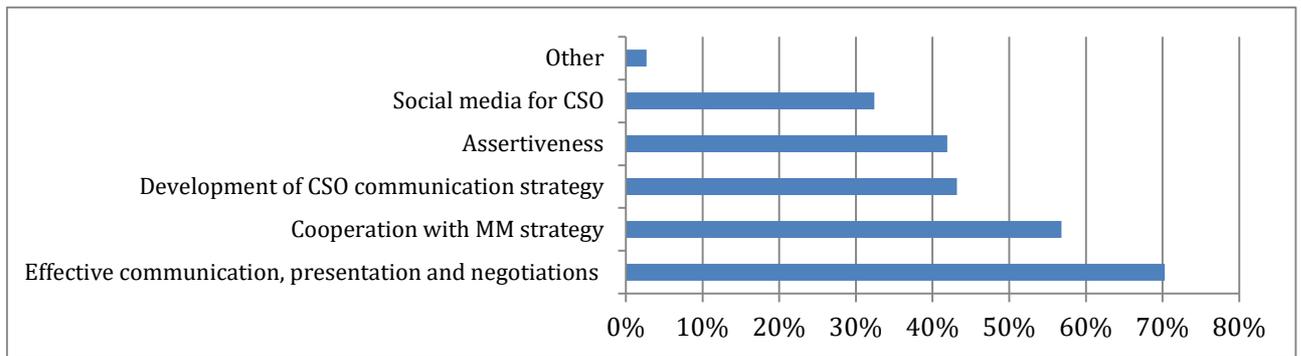
In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ reporting on the organization's activity;
- ✓ development of the system of monitoring and assessment of the organization's activities.

Communications

Figure 13. NGOs' Training Needs in Communication, (N=80)

TRAINING NEEDS OF NGOs

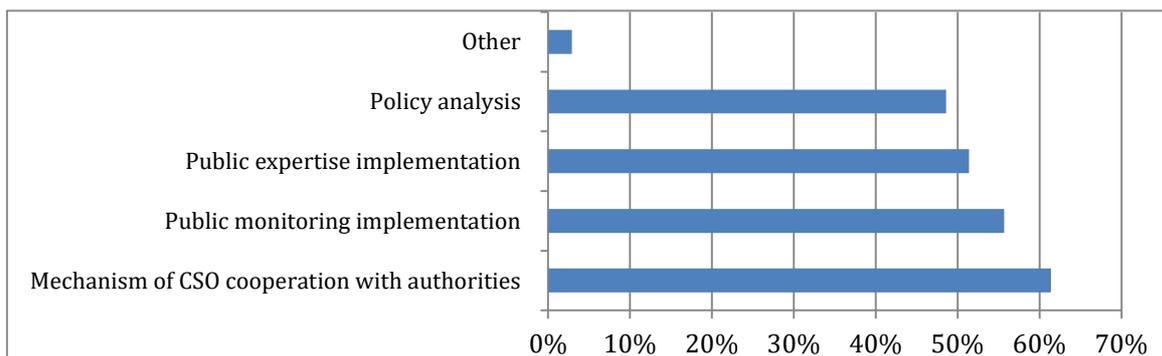


In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ communication with MM, correct conveyance of messages to MM and establishment of relations with MM;
- ✓ efficient work in the Internet;
- ✓ informing the public on the organization's activity;
- ✓ presentation of the organization;
- ✓ PR strategy development;
- ✓ PR campaign holding;
- ✓ press release preparation;
- ✓ influence on MM on the legislative level, pre-trial issue settlement;
- ✓ CSO portal creation with the information about different organizations;
- ✓ high-quality work in the Internet, work with information flows;
- ✓ holding efficient negotiations;
- ✓ expansion of the target audience and dissemination of information on the organization's activity;
- ✓ awareness-raising campaigns;
- ✓ how to convey information to the target audience.

Cooperation with the Authorities and Local Self-Government Bodies

Figure 14. NGOs' Training Needs in Their Cooperation with the Authorities, (N=80)



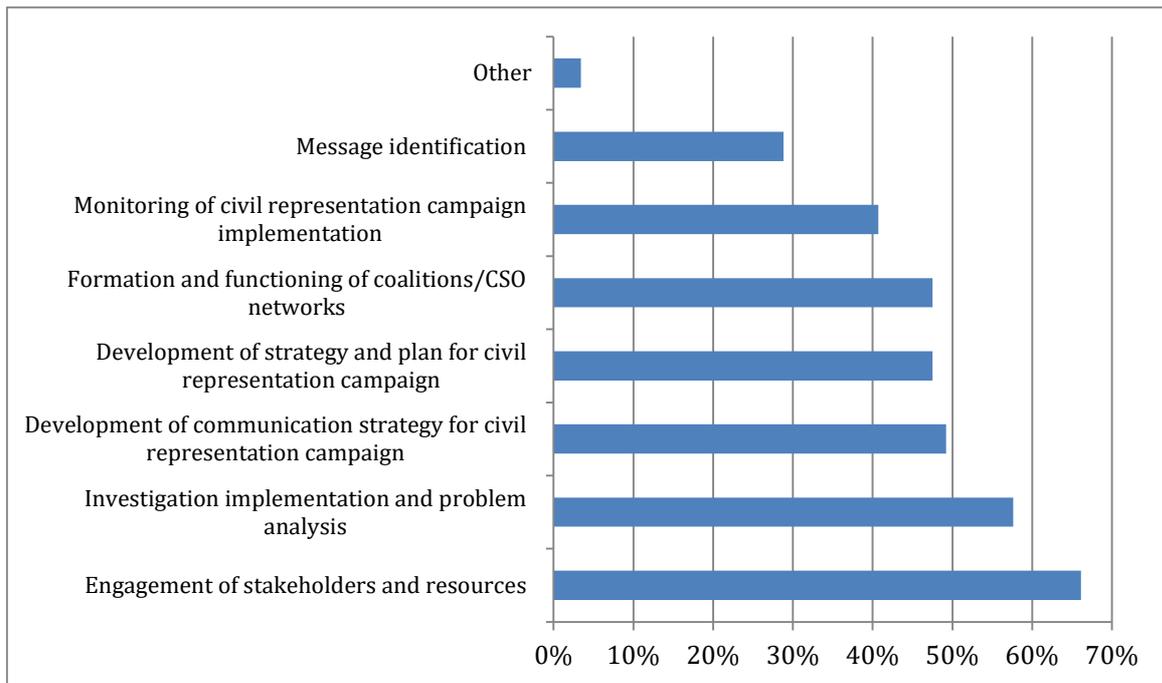
In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ efficient communications with the authorities.

Civil Representation

Figure 15. NGOs' Training Needs in civil Representation, (N=80)

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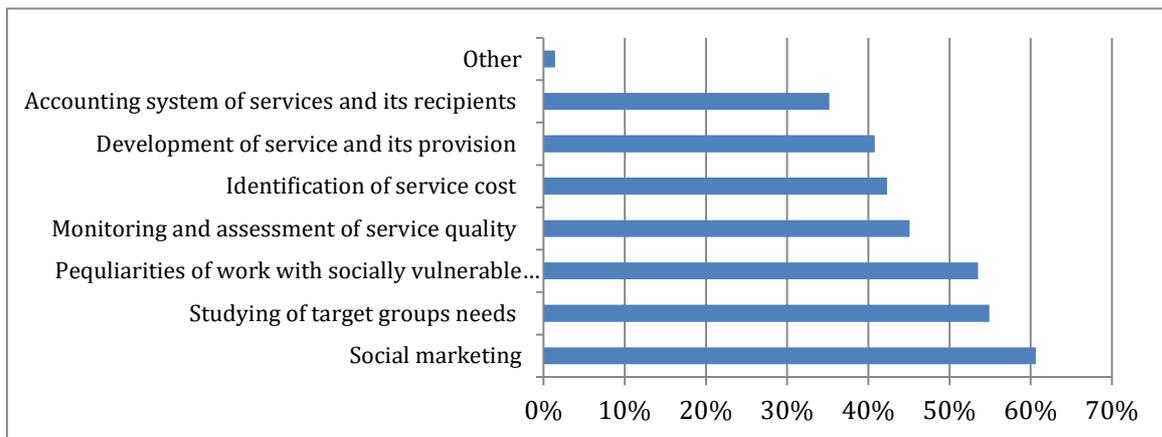


In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ legislation lobbying

Service provision

Figure 16. NGOs' Training Needs in Services Provision, (N=80)



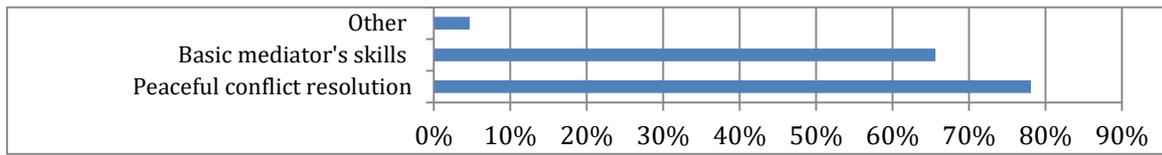
In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ forming the needs for services among the target audience;
- ✓ provision of psychological aid;
- ✓ getting specialized experts trained to work with children-orphans, overcoming stereotypes in the society in relation to such children.

Peace Building, Conflict Resolution, Mediation

Figure 17. NGOs' Training Needs in Peace Making, etc. (N=80)

TRAINING NEEDS OF NGOs

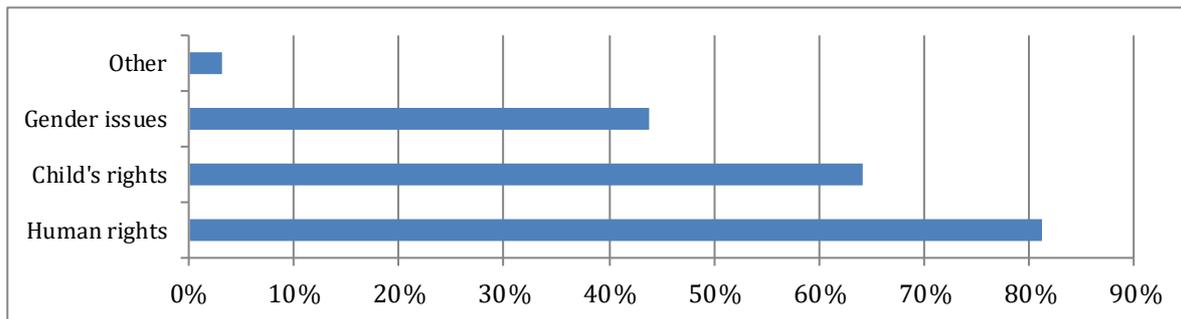


In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ conflict management;
- ✓ crisis situation management;
- ✓ mediators training;

Human Rights

Figure 18. NGOs' Training Needs in Human Rights, (N=80)

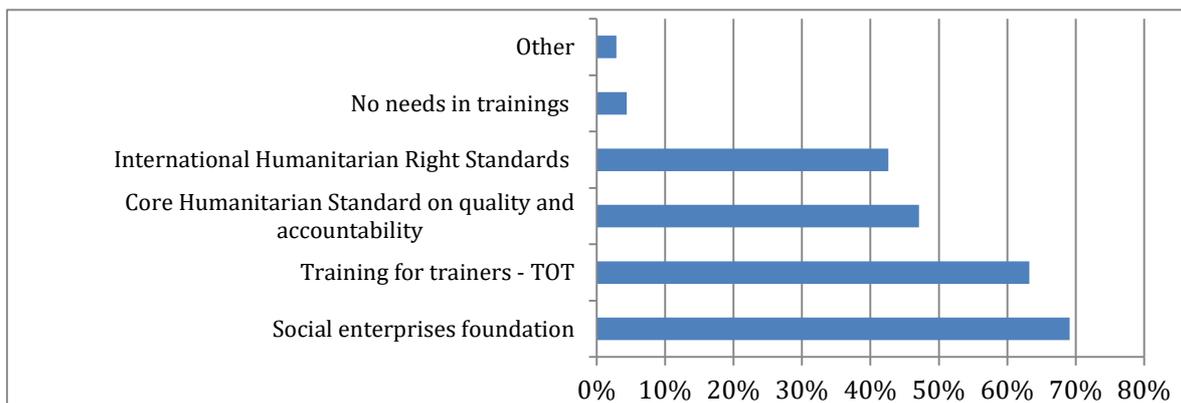


In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ✓ working with adults via children.

Other Training

Figure 19. Other NGOs' Training Needs, (N=80)



In addition to the abovementioned topics, focus group participants have mentioned the following:

- ❑ Working with donor organizations, and namely:
 - ✓ Communication with donor organizations and specific features of donor organizations' activity
 - ✓ Specific features of the activity of social donor organizations working with displaced persons;
 - ✓ Report preparation and feedback from donors;
- ❑ Holding/facilitation of debates, round tables, focus groups;
- ❑ Doing studies, including
 - ✓ Study program development

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- ✓ Development of a program for research carrying out
- ✓ Collecting data
- How to set up own business;

Only three organizations out of 84 surveyed have indicated that they have no need for trainings.

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III. CONCLUSIONS

NGOs' needs assessment has shown the following.

Organizational level of the overwhelming majority of those surveyed is poor due to their young age and type of their activity, directed at the implementation of topical programs important for their target groups. The NGOs provide consultative, humanitarian, representation help to displaced persons, children, low income and vulnerable people; the need for such activities and such organizations has been revealed over the last two years. That is why management and *planning* are chaotic and spontaneous. The organizations do not have any strategic vision of their work based on their missions for several years to come and they almost do not have any operational planning of the activities of the organization as a single mechanism. Planning of the organizations is mainly done on a project-to-project basis.

Some of the organizations have been set up recently and for some period of time operated as voluntary ones, that is why they have no experience of *organization management*. Due to absence of proper management such organizations have problems with decision-making process. Absence of corporate culture and lack of experts in conflict management lead to conflicts both inside the organization and in their work with the target audience. The organizations lack managers and have no established system of their training.

The majority of those surveyed have pointed out the lack of *qualified staff and good project managers* as well as absence of purposeful work with staff and volunteers both in terms of development of their capacities and team building. Almost all the assessment participants have highlighted the absence of the system of ongoing staff training aimed at their ability to have quick response to the ongoing changes. There is not enough money to hire qualified staff. And as the result, a considerable part of the NGOs have pointed out the professional burnout of their staff since they mainly have to work with the representatives of target groups facing highly complicated life circumstances. Also, there are not enough specialists to provide assistance to the target groups, in particular, psychologists and lawyers to work with IDPs and ATO participants as well as experts in working with youth and people with disabilities.

Volunteers are the basis for the majority of organizations. The surveyed organizations have pointed out insufficient knowledge and skills to involve and keep volunteers who would have responsible attitude towards their duties. Absence of proper volunteer management leads to volunteers being not always interested in accomplishing the tasks set, while the organizations have no skills to motivate them.

Insufficient *funding* and relying on donors to much in combination with lack of experience in getting grants and insufficient level of knowledge in *financial management* is a problem of most NGOs. The overwhelming majority of organizations do not have sufficient funding to involve competent employees and/or have trainings for their staff and volunteers.

Work with the environment also results in some challenges to the majority of the NGOs. The organizations have pointed out both – insufficient experience of interaction with authorities and insufficiency of such cooperation. Irrespective of the fact that donors constitute the main source of funding for NGOs, the organizations do not understand how donors work, why they set certain requirements and insist on compliance with the funding terms, etc. The surveyed NGOs would like to work with business to attract money into their activities, but they have no experience of communicating and cooperating with them.

Proper internal and external *communication* constitutes a challenge for the majority of the NGOs. Almost all the organizations have problems with disseminating information about their activities – they do not prepare annual accounts, do not disseminate information on their activities among the target groups, do not efficiently use available information dissemination channels like MM, own sites, social networks, etc. The surveyed organizations do not have enough experience in communicating with MM to spread information on their activities; problems arise with the layout of information, in choosing information dissemination channels and with writing press-announcements and press releases.

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Program/project activity – in developing programs and projects the organizations lack writing skills. Some organizations face the problem with correct and clear wording of the problem aimed at solving it. While developing programs not all the organizations can involve the authorities in solving the problems of the target groups, and local authorities are not always willing to cooperate with the organizations. While developing programs and projects the organizations lack project writing skills and the skills of communicating with donor organizations. The organizations have not enough knowledge to conduct project monitoring and assessment. Some of the participants would like to earn money for the activity of their organizations themselves, for instance, to set up a social company, but they have too little information on how to establish such a company and how to carry out activity.

Service provision. The main problems in the activities of the CSOs arising in the development of projects and programs in service provision to the target group are as follows: failure of the programs and projects to correspond to the needs of the target group, distrust of the target group in the organizations, insufficient informing of the target group about the activities and services of the organizations, absence of high-quality programs for a long-term stay of IDPs as well as low interest and unwillingness of IDPs to undergo trainings, participate in the events of the organization, insufficient cooperation with authorities, unwillingness of local authorities to cooperate with public organizations, dependence of organization's funding on donors. According to the information provided by the respondents, they try to study the needs of their clients but they have little experience – mainly these are telephone surveys, as well as information coming from the clients addressing their organization for help. Though most organizations have pointed out their close cooperation with their target groups, in practice only a small group of NGOs involves its clients in the development of service provision programs, has some mechanisms of controlling the quality of the services provided and the level of satisfaction of clients with such services, conducts monitoring and assessment of its programs and projects.

Civil representation. Representation and advocating the interests of the target groups are mainly done by the organizations on the basis of addresses of the representatives of their target groups. Most organizations do not independently study the problems and interests of the target groups. And though the organizations do some work in legal aid provision to their target groups, they confess to poor knowledge of legislation and its non-correspondence and lack of clarity, shortage of specialized experts in the sphere, in particular in relation to ATO participants and IDPs. Planning of civil representation campaigns is lagging behind within the majority of the surveyed NGOs; the same situation is witnessed with information and awareness-raising events among the stakeholder groups as regards the essence and expected results of such campaigns. As the result, not all the organizations have a well-established mechanism of involving target groups in the campaign implementation, conduct monitoring of campaign implementation and assessment of their results. Regardless of the fact that many organizations have successful examples of conducting civil representation campaigns, they rarely share them. Insufficient *funding* and relying on donors too much in combination with lack of experience in getting grants and insufficient level of knowledge in *financial management* is a problem of most NGOs. The overwhelming majority of organizations do not have sufficient funding to involve competent employees and/or have trainings for their staff and volunteers.

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IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the assessment made it is recommended to arrange a comprehensive program in NGO capacity strengthening consisting of the following thematic blocks.

1. NGO administration and management will include the following issues:

- ✓ principles of proper NGO management – participation of the organization members, the role of management and functions of the supervisory board;
- ✓ Organization management – leadership style and management rules, strategic and operational planning; management and internal control systems; monitoring and assessment; management under the conditions of changes and in crisis situations; time management;
- ✓ Human resources – work with staff and volunteers; development and training strategies; mentoring and motivation; conflict management; team building.

2. Development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of programs and projects

- ✓ project development;
- ✓ outcome-based project management;
- ✓ development of the system of project monitoring and assessment;
- ✓ reporting on projects' results.

3. Financial management

- ✓ sources of NGOs' funding;
- ✓ ways of involving investment – fund raising;
- ✓ fund raising in crisis situations
- ✓ finance management
- ✓ principles of financial sustainability and support.

4. Communication and cooperation with the external stakeholders

- ✓ NGOs' communication mechanisms and channels;
- ✓ development and holding of PR campaigns, information dissemination and awareness-raising campaigns;
- ✓ approaches to informing target groups on the activities of NGOs and their mobilization towards cooperating with NGOs;
- ✓ special features of the activities of authorities in Ukraine and mechanisms of cooperation between NGOs and authorities;
- ✓ interests of business and ways to motivate it to cooperate with NGOs;
- ✓ efficient cooperation of NGOs with MM;
- ✓ negotiation holding.

5. Provision of services and arranging civil representation campaigns

- ✓ Service provision – study of the needs of target groups, development of services to meet clients' needs; system of client and service accounting; assessment of the quality of services and level of client satisfaction; cost reimbursement; cooperation with authorities.
- ✓ Civil representation – collection of information and study of the issues important for communities; determination of the NGOs' standpoint; involvement of tangible and financial resources for conducting campaigns; informing and mobilization of the public towards advocating the elaborated standpoint; development of action plan for campaign implementation; formation of and work in coalitions; monitoring of campaign implementation and result assessment; review of the standpoint on the basis of the results of monitoring and assessment;
- ✓ Accountability of NGOs – preparation of annual accounts and activity reports;
- ✓ Ethical grounds for the activities of NGOs.

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6. Social entrepreneurship