



UKRAINE NGO FORUM
STRATEGY 2016-2017

Information sharing, coordination, capacity building, and advocacy in order to enhance impact and effectiveness





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ukraine NGO forum strategy 2016-2017	3
Introduction	3
Looking back and results	3
Strategic Plan Purpose	4
Mid-term review	4
Ukraine NGO Forum core values	5
Ukraine ngo forum secretariat core principles	5
Ukraine NGO Forum Vision	5
Ukraine NGO Forum Mission	6
Objectives	6
Membership	6
Governance of Ukraine NGO Forum	7
ENvironment: The Ukrainian context	9
Strategic priorities	10
Strengthen and enhance the NGO voice and common advocacy	10
Focusing and strengthening our program direction	10
Raising our profile and increasing member and partner engagement	10
Growing and diversifying our funding base	10
Strengthening our capacity to achieve organizational goals and Address membership needs	11
Develop the capacity of the civil society so that it can deliver its core mandate and influence internal and External policies and practices	11
Other strategic priorities	11
Activities	11
Analysis	12
Advocacy and Representation	12
Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	13
Information Management	13
Operational Capacity	13
Safety and Security	14
General Member Services	14



Strategic Decision-Making	14
Training	15
Organisational structure	15
General Meeting	15
Steering Committee	15
Working groups	15
Secretariat	15
Human resources	16
Funding Strategy	17
Ukraine NGO Forum Workplan	18
Evaluation and Monitoring	19

Annex 1 Workplan (6 months)



UKRAINE NGO FORUM STRATEGY 2016-2017

INTRODUCTION

Ukraine NGO Forum was established in mid-2014 to facilitate information sharing, coordination and advocacy activities in order to enhance the impact and effectiveness of humanitarian and recovery activities in Ukraine, based on ethical obligations, transparency and accountability.

Currently the Forum has also initiated the development of strategies promoting participation of NGO stakeholders related to transitional and development activities, and thereby also a sustainable membership base. The Ukraine NGO Forum works closely with Ukrainian and international NGO's, agencies, departments and offices of the United Nations and Ukrainian Government, as well as non-traditional humanitarian actors.

NGO coordination is not an end in itself, but should be a means to an end, such as improving humanitarian response, development efforts, transparency, advocacy, funding, access or accountability. Ukraine NGO Forum exists to complement existing coordination mechanisms and does not seek to compete with them. Ukraine NGO Forum is represented in HCT as well as within the Inter-cluster coordination group and advocates on behalf of its member base.

An important function of a strong NGO platform is its ability to contribute to further empowerment of a NGO community that is coherent, respected and well informed.

Ukraine NGO Forum is a membership organization and we acknowledge that, for any membership organization to remain useful it must manage and satisfy to the extent possible, expectations from a diverse group of members and other actors, as such the Strategic Plan needs to be viewed as an organic document.

This is not supposed to be a lengthy jargon-filled documents that will gather dust on its members and donor's shelves, but a living document that help give meaningful direction for decisions and will require regular updates, especially to adjust to the Ukrainian context to remain valid.

LOOKING BACK AND RESULTS

This section highlights some of the key achievements to date, which functions as a baseline for further action and this strategic plan in particular.

COORDINATION

- During 2015 Ukraine NGO Forum played important role in coordination and harmonization of accreditation issues within NGCA and access of humanitarian cargos.
- Two joint assessments were conducted (Ukraine Multi Sector Needs Assessment Report, from March 30, 2015 and CHS Alliance Mission to Ukraine Report from July 2015)



- A database of local NGOs responding to crisis on both GCAs and NGCAs was developed
- Regular dissemination of INGOs vacancy announcements
- Separate meeting for admin and finance staff to manage taxation, legal, employment and other issues

ADVOCACY

- With the support of Ukraine NGO Forum, the voice of the national and international NGOs was raised within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) (number of NGOs increased from 4 to 9)
- Joint messages regarding humanitarian access were developed and shared with the humanitarian group of Minsk talks.
- Advocated and assisted for development of the final version of the Law on Humanitarian Aid in Crisis Situations

CAPACITY BUILDING

- NGO forum conducted series of trainings on Core Humanitarian Standard in different regions
- Trainings on Communication with communities and local media with support of Internews
- Ukraine NGO Forum conducted regular meetings of Admin/Finance specialist working at I/NGOs and organized a thematic training for them to introduce recent changes in Ukrainian legislation, taxation, employment, etc.
- Training in monitoring and accountability of the NGOs in emergency situations

STRATEGIC PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of this strategic plan is to enhance the idea behind the Ukraine NGO Forum and how it can and should move forward. The strategy plan will help the Ukraine NGO Forum to understand possibilities, capacities, problems and resources. An understanding of these areas will help the Ukraine NGO Forum and its members to analyze its strengths and build upon opportunities, in consortium with its Steering Committee.

In addition, the Strategic Plan outline principles and priorities for Ukraine NGO Forum by placing emphasis on clearly defined and evaluable activity areas facilitating transparent and tangible results and benefits for its members.

MID-TERM REVIEW

A mid-term review will be initiated in the beginning of 2017, and is expected to include a process of consultation with member organizations across Ukraine, the Steering Committee, the wider civil society and other critical stakeholders in the Ukrainian operating environment: civil society organizations outside the membership, representatives from key government departments that the Ukraine NGO Forum works with, UN agencies, and other humanitarian assistance and development partners including donors and other interagency bodies.



Such a consultative process and review will be critical to ensure relevance and a result oriented approach of the Ukraine NGO Forum. The result of such a review can propose changes and rationalization as related to the Strategic Plan, related to for example programming, governance and organizing at operational and administrative level.

UKRAINE NGO FORUM CORE VALUES

Every Ukraine NGO Forum member organization should operate on the basis of fundamental principles, which make successful operation and cooperation possible.

- Fundamental to the very character of each NGO is that it be not-for-profit, nongovernmental, organized, independent and self-governing.
- Members believe that respect, cooperation and common action with other civil society organizations is beneficial for advancing their mutual mission-related objectives, as collaboration for the common good may reduce the duplication of services, enhance advocacy, allow for the pairing of diverse strengths and resources, and promote effectiveness in tackling priorities.
- Members operate in a transparent, honest, and non-corrupt manner and are accountable for their actions and decisions, not only to funding agencies and the government, but to the people they serve, staff and members, partner organizations, and the public at large.
- Members recognize that their activities impact upon the perception of the NGO Forum and its members.
- Members shall not exploit or misrepresent their membership for personal or organizational gain.

UKRAINE NGO FORUM SECRETARIAT CORE PRINCIPLES

In addition, the Ukraine NGO Forum secretariat team will also honor the following internal principles:

- Respect for all, appreciation of one's limitations and mutual support
- Service orientation and openness
- Innovation and continuous learning
- Equal opportunity
- Integrity and honesty
- Principled approach

UKRAINE NGO FORUM VISION

A Ukraine where a respected NGO community is able to fully participate in and contribute to the sustainable development of a peaceful and equitable society, and is fully acknowledged for its important contributions and the positive impact of its action.



UKRAINE NGO FORUM MISSION

A strong NGO platform that is able to contribute to further empowerment of a NGO community that is coherent, respected and well informed, creating synergies within and advocate for civil society in Ukraine to act together and learn from each other to the benefit of its beneficiaries and the society at large.

OBJECTIVES

Ukraine NGO Forum in accordance with the Sphere Project Minimum Standards will strive to ensure that “humanitarian response is planned and implemented with the relevant authorities, humanitarian agencies and civil society organizations engaged in impartial humanitarian action, working together for maximum efficiency, coverage and effectiveness.”

In addition, provide and develop activities based on a comprehensive understanding of transitional and possible post-conflict environment, based on do no harm principles, and sustainability through national and local ownership and investment in capacity development at all levels.

Specific objectives of the Ukraine NGO Forum includes:

- Facilitate operational-level discussion amongst actors responding to the crisis in Ukraine, including issues related to access, security at the field level, synergies and duplication, policy matters affecting program implementation, other;
- Share information as part of open discussion and resolution of issues affecting agencies' ability to respond, including registration, legislation, coordination, funding;
- Build capacity of international and national NGOs through various seminars and workshops;
- Advocate on behalf of the NGO community on agreed strategic and urgent issues related to humanitarian and development action.

MEMBERSHIP

Ukraine NGO Forum is a membership organization. Ukraine NGO Forum encourages the participation of national and international NGOs in NGO Forum joint activities through formalized membership. NGO Forum membership allows for responsible coordination, joint advocacy, participation in trainings, networking and information exchange.

All approved members of Ukraine NGO Forum have the right of voice and vote in regular NGO Forum coordination meetings. Senior management of agencies with member status may be elected to serve on the Steering Committee.

In order to be considered for membership in the Ukraine NGO Forum, organizations are required to:



- Be a non-government organization (NGO), which is non-for-profit, not for proselytizing, works beyond the borders of politics, religion, culture and ethnicity, and is not aligned with any political party or para-military organizations inside or outside the country.
- Be legally registered, or in the process of registering within territory of Ukraine (provide supporting documents);
- Have an office or representative inside the country.
- Be committed to active and regular participation, support and exercising its vote in working groups and meetings of Ukraine NGO Forum. Be willing to share information with members and actively participate to promote the vision, mission and mandate of Ukraine NGO Forum.
- Accurately pay membership fees on the basis prescribed, to the amount set by the Steering Committee. The initial six months of membership is free of charge, after the organization will be requested to pay its membership fee.
- The member organization shall make available the names of its governing body, such as the steering committee or executive staff, and publicize any changes in its governing board.
- Adhere to international humanitarian and human rights standards.
- Accept, sign, and adhere to the Ukraine NGO Forum Core Values.

Intergovernmental organizations, businesses, NGOs without a full-time presence in Ukraine, or for-profit NGOs cannot become a member of Ukraine NGO Forum, but can, on a case-by-case basis, participate in the events organized by Ukraine NGO Forum.

Organizations fulfilling the above criteria will then need to provide the following documents, which will be reviewed by the Secretariat:

- Registration Form: completed [online registration form](#).
- Legal registration: A copy of the I/NGO's legal registration within territory of Ukraine, or evidence that registration is in process.
- Governance documentation: A copy of the I/NGO's written constitution/statute that clearly defines the I/NGO's mission, objectives and organizational structure, including board and executive.
- Financial statement (tax report or audit report) to show viability of the entity.
- Annual report/description of activities.

In addition to the requirements stated above, new members must be approved by Ukraine NGO Forum with a majority vote upon a recommendation by Ukraine NGO Forum Steering Committee.

GOVERNANCE OF UKRAINE NGO FORUM

The Steering Committee (SC) is elected by Ukraine NGO Forum members to provide strategic and principled guidance on their behalf with the objective to support and steer Ukraine NGO Forum and Ukraine NGO Forum Secretariat. The SC is accountable to Ukraine NGO Forum members. The SC is required to ensure that Ukraine NGO Forum acts in accordance with its mission through meaningful oversight of operations and policy guidance in a way that assures integrity and



effective management but without leading to board involvement in Ukraine NGO Forum day-to-day activities.

SC consists of five members and 2 alternatives elected for a six month period.

Steering Committee members are appointed in their individual capacity and elected for their proven personal skillset. For this reason, a Ukraine NGO Forum SC member cannot be replaced in the position by another person from within his/her organization.

The SC meetings are called and organized by the SC Chairperson in coordination with the Secretariat. Minutes are distributed among members and records are kept by Ukraine NGO Forum Secretariat.

In addition to face-to-face meetings, the Steering Committee communicates regularly via email and through conference calls.

At any given time, the SC may request an ad-hoc or extraordinary Ukraine NGO Forum meeting to discuss an issue of significance.

The minutes of the SC meetings are distributed electronically among members and records are kept within the Secretariat. Minutes are prepared by the Secretariat and approved for circulation by the Steering Committee no later than three weeks after each meeting.

The Chairperson will strive to optimize the relationship between the SC and Ukraine NGO Forum secretariat management, chair SC meetings, and ensure effective SC functioning. The Chairperson, in coordination with the Secretariat, will call SC meetings.

Wherever possible, the SC takes its decisions by consensus. When consensus cannot be achieved, a decision can be taken by a vote of the simple majority.

A minimum attendance at each meeting is necessary to ensure that the different viewpoints of committee members are adequately represented. The minimum of 3 Steering Committee members constitutes a valid meeting.

The SC sets the overall strategic direction and oversight for Ukraine NGO Forum by:

- assisting in the preparation of the work plan and strategy developed by the Secretariat
- acting as a sounding board for the Ukraine NGO Forum director
- approving the Ukraine NGO Forum work plan, strategy and budget as presented by the Ukraine NGO Forum Secretariat;
- ensuring that Ukraine NGO Forum fulfils its objectives as outlined in the work plan and strategy;
- attending the Ukraine NGO Forum coordination meetings regularly, prepares for and contributes appropriately and effectively;



- prioritizing and proposing activities and specific focus areas to guide advocacy and activities;
- assisting the Secretariat in developing Ukraine NGO Forum policy/advocacy documents (i. e. letters, statements, etc.), project proposals and advocacy initiatives;
- appointing the Ukraine NGO Forum Director and approves the creation of any new positions supporting the Secretariat;
- monitoring, evaluating, determining the compensation level of and – if necessary – replacing the Ukraine NGO Forum Director.
- undertaking to understand the organization’s risk profile and re-viewing and overseeing the Ukraine NGO Forum management of risks.
- assisting in obtaining resources through making personally meaningful contributions, fundraising and/or grant-writing or facilitating secondments.
- approving budgets, financial plans and financial statements; monitoring and ensuring the integrity of the organization’s financial reporting processes, internal control systems and audit; hiring the independent auditor (if and when required) and assuring itself of the auditor’s independence.
- deciding upon the exclusion of a member on account of breach of conduct or outstanding membership fee.

ENVIRONMENT: THE UKRAINIAN CONTEXT

“The armed conflict that started in eastern Ukraine in April 2014 intensified in early 2015 resulting in further civilian casualties, extensive suffering and significant displacement in both rural and significantly densely populated urban areas. Even with the 12 February 2015 ‘Full Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements’, sporadic fighting continues in several locations along the ‘contact line’ between Government forces and armed groups. Despite the spike in fighting, the September 2015 renewed ceasefire agreed by parties to the conflict has largely held resulting in a significant reduction in fighting, bringing partial relief for people who had hitherto been living under the constant fear of bombardment. Nonetheless, the conflict is yet to be resolved and continues to have a disproportionate impact on civilians. Humanitarian partners estimate that, as of October 2015, at least 3.7 million people have been affected in Ukraine both directly and indirectly, 3.1 million of whom require humanitarian assistance.”¹

Collective action by civil society organizations is a very important part of enhancing the effectiveness of the work of civil society. One of the major criticisms of civil society organizations in Ukraine is the lack of coordination and collective organization among NGOs, which is perceived to contribute to overlaps, and failure to see and build synergies, as well as provide a principled balance to other humanitarian and development actors. The Ukraine NGO Forum platform focuses on sharing and reflection to create synergy and ensure that organizations are able to learn from each other as well as build a strong networks across the country.

¹ Humanitarian Response Plan, 2016, Ukraine.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

For this two-year period, our strategic priorities will be to strengthen our programmatic focus, strengthening our institutional foundation and membership, while also considering long-term sustainability.

Ukraine NGO Forum have identified five strategic priorities for the platform:

STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE THE NGO VOICE AND COMMON ADVOCACY

By working together, NGOs can be more effective in advocating positive changes of benefit to Ukraine and its people. Formal membership of Ukraine NGO Forum shows commitment to work together with other NGOs for positive change, which is especially relevant as related to advocacy promoting effectual change. Ukraine NGO Forum will promote common positions as well as develop and enhance processes leading up to more effective common messaging.

FOCUSING AND STRENGTHENING OUR PROGRAM DIRECTION

During 2016-2017 we will focus our program directions while continuing to strengthen and expand our collective action and learning. Ukraine NGO Forum members will be key in clearly and effectively express a collective opinion as related to the way ahead for Ukraine NGO Forum, thereby determining the program direction. Collective action and learning has been and will continue to be at the heart of Ukraine NGO Forum. This will include refining sector strategies, prioritizing and programming projects and activities, resolving issues, and formulating action plans. Activities and programs will be formulated in concert with its members ensuring usefulness and ownership.

RAISING OUR PROFILE AND INCREASING MEMBER AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

During 2016-2017, we will articulate and share broadly our unique identity and the value we offer our members, our donors, and other partners, including government stakeholders. We will aim increase our membership by at least 100% and explore associate memberships to increase organizational diversity and build organizational strength, in particular the Ukraine NGO Forum will focus on engaging national NGOs . Through new and improved engagement strategies, we will increase our profile and value, as well as sustainability, as a platform within the Ukrainian NGO community.

GROWING AND DIVERSIFYING OUR FUNDING BASE

Going forward, we will use our enhanced fundraising, outreach, and communications capacity to raise knowledge of the Ukraine NGO Forum's mandate, accomplishments and key competencies and to strengthen our competitive position for grant and contract funding. We will work closely with members to identify opportunities and actively seek partnerships with our member base. Ukraine NGO Forum will pursue traditional paths of grant raising from traditional sources, while also exploring new funding sources and avenues, such as crowd and peer-to-peer



funding. See also funding strategy below. On a strategic level Ukraine NGO Forum will work actively to increase donor support for the NGO community in general in Ukraine and to the national NGOs in particular.

STRENGTHENING OUR CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND ADDRESS MEMBERSHIP NEEDS

Ukraine NGO Forum will aim to increase its human resources to better accommodate the needs of its membership base and quality in its actions, including within information and administration. This is self-evidently also directly linked to the needs based on a greater membership base and outreach into the regions of Ukraine. In addition, Ukraine NGO Forum foresees its own office facilities during the first half of 2016, this will not only strengthen the identity and neutrality of Ukraine NGO Forum but contribute to the provision of new services to its membership base such as the provision of meeting and conference facilities.

DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY SO THAT IT CAN DELIVER ITS CORE MANDATE AND INFLUENCE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

This priority needs broad intervention and can be linked to all five areas above. To enhance effectiveness and approach long-term sustainability responsibly, the development of capacity within areas as far apart as accounting and Core Humanitarian Standards remain critical.

OTHER STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To facilitate the adoption of best practice Ukraine NGO Forum will aim to strengthen regional and global collaborations, and if necessary or requested to do so lead such processes.

Serve as a focal point of Sphere project in Ukraine, work in close relation with the Sphere Project office to raise awareness and disseminate knowledge of Sphere principles and standards at country-wide level.

Although significant positive steps towards effective institutionalization of Ukraine NGO Forum we feel the need to further strengthen our internal governance processes in order to have the moral high ground to engage effectively, ensure a balanced level of secretariat independence, and to ensure accountability and transparency.

In addition, the Ukraine NGO forum will focus on action and initiatives that address, recognize and promote respect for gender and diversity, female empowerment as well as other related issues.

ACTIVITIES

For the period 2016-2017 Ukraine NGO Forum remains committed to enhance and strengthening current advocacy, coordination and information exchange efforts. Considering the fluid context in Ukraine NGO Forum will strive to adjust its efforts to maintain relevance.



In particular, Ukraine NGO Forum will strive to incorporate efforts to enhance transitional and development efforts. The efforts of Ukraine NGO Forum will fulfil a wide range of functions depending on the specific requirements related to the Ukrainian context.

Ukraine NGO Forum exists to complement existing coordination mechanisms and does not seek to compete with or replace them. To be effective, Ukraine NGO Forum must focus on activities, which are selected based on priority needs and gaps in the operating context as well as common priorities, objectives and relevance. These activities also have to be clearly linked to the capacity of the members, the staff, funding, and other resources.

The Ukraine NGO forum will focus on 10 main areas which will include sub activity areas.

It is suggested that Ukraine NGO Forum for the period of 2016-2017 should venture to engage with the following activities, services or products, still considering available funding and member focus and requests.

ANALYSIS

- Access Mapping
- Actor/Stakeholder analysis
- Scenario development
- Transitional and development activity analysis

ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

- Develop advocacy strategies and messaging on NGO priorities and behalf of members:
 - Towards the Ukrainian government as well as de facto authorities
 - For donors
 - Towards the general public
 - For the humanitarian community
 - Towards media, e. g., awareness raising on critical humanitarian issues
 - To UN agencies, including programmatic issues and prioritization
 - To CIMIC
 - Toward de facto authorities in NGCA
 - To international community, e.g. embassies and delegations
 - Towards international bodies
- Providing advocacy toolkits
- Capacity-building in advocacy
- Developing and maintaining common advocacy platform

See also below Strategic Decision-making



ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

- Developing and implementing and or coordinating joint needs assessments
- Collating program reviews, assessments, evaluations, and lessons learned
- Facilitating inter-agency discussion of reviews and evaluations
- Facilitating and or coordinating and implementing joint monitoring, assessments, evaluations, and reviews
- Creating opportunities and a platform for sharing knowledge and experience between members
- Facilitating inter-agency expert meetings, e. g., human resources, advocacy, finance, administration
- Reviewing programming gaps/duplication

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Information sharing, coordination, and analysis leading to better humanitarian and/or development decision-making
- Coordinated assessments and monitoring missions, especially sharing of results
- Providing relevant information such as population figures pre-emergency, maps, data, or graphics, where there are gaps or Ukraine NGO Forum services are requested
- Providing online informational platform services, for example related to vacancies, trainings, etc.
- Sharing data, reports, advocacy messages
- Producing situational updates for members based on external information, or for external actors based on members' information
- Publishing NGOs contact list or agency directory
- Providing single contact point for members
- Producing maps and map products
- Collating needs assessments from members
- Monitoring resource availability amongst members
- Facilitating joint or common needs assessments

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

- Establishing specific coordination structures, for example standing or temporary working groups, on issues such as HR/Admin/Fin, and Gender, specifically requested by members.
- Maintaining interactive organization mapping database
- Convening topical Ukraine NGO Forum meetings



- Regional Ukraine NGO Forum meetings
- Developing sectoral policies and guidelines
- Facilitating inter-agency program planning

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Advocating on behalf on NGO community related to specific security related issues and concerns.
- Liaising with governmental authorities, military forces, i.e. CIMIC, when needed or requested, and creating understanding for same
- Facilitating planning, holding and/or coordinating PEP kit/information.
- Coordinating/arranging/facilitating security trainings, seminars, workshops, as requested by members or organizing member parties
- Creating a consolidated advocacy messages or position as requested by members

GENERAL MEMBER SERVICES

- Sharing relevant information with, and between, members on various topics
- Facilitating registration with relevant authorities
- Providing taxation advice on import, income, and other requirements
- Providing legal advice, for example related to Ukrainian labor laws
- Carrying out member surveys on key issues, such as staff salaries
- Providing free meeting and conference facilities, and/or resource center
- Providing translation services related to critical documents
- Mediating between member NGOs and/or external stakeholders
- Mediating between NGOs and external stakeholders/partners
- Mediating between international and local NGOs
- Being neutral observer and facilitator of sensitive processes and discussions

STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

- Facilitating collective adoption of joint member principles, standards, core values or codes of conduct
- Facilitating collective adoption of internal policies if requested, for example minimum standards anti-discrimination, gender, health insurance, accident assurance, safety and security and facilitating collective adoption of *Redlines*
- Facilitating collective adoption of external policies if requested, i.e. support for local markets, NGCA approaches, procurement, and national capacity support, donor, and facilitating collective adoption of *Redlines*
- Scenario planning



TRAINING

- Providing or facilitating training in key common areas such as: accountability frameworks humanitarian standards, effective partnership needs assessment, security, humanitarian principles as well as topical issues such as gender, accounting, conflict sensitivity, anti-discrimination, IHL, CHS, Sphere, intercultural understanding
- Providing information about, and assisting participation in, external training courses
- Running or facilitating joint simulations
- Facilitating standardization of member training schemes and curricula, such as inclusion of gender, anti-discrimination, CHS, Sphere
- Public private partnership trainings
- Facilitating trainings on INGO NNGO cooperation
- Training for trainers within multiple fields including Sphere, IHL, and Gender

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

GENERAL MEETING

The general meeting will continue to be essential for most NGO coordination, which will bring together a critical mass from a clearly defined NGO constituency in a clearly defined structure for clearly defined purposes. Ukraine NGO Forum will aim to expand its general meetings also on a regional and field level, to attract increased membership, in particular national NGOs, and facilitate the achievement of its overall objectives. Ukraine NGO Forum will going forward aim to provide simultaneous translation within the framework of its general meetings to facilitate the participation of national NGO members.

STEERING COMMITTEE

See above

WORKING GROUPS

Ukraine NGO Forum will continue to create standing or temporary working groups considering member feedback and identified needs, to continue to be able to effectively and operationally address specific issues related to for example administrative, advocacy or access.

SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat will continue to function to meet the programmatic priorities and demands and/or some core administrative functions to support the running of the coordination platform. The Secretariat, and its coordinators, will continue to play an essential role for joint advocacy,



coordination, and fundraising. Its cooperation with the Steering Committee the tasks and responsibilities of the Senior Coordinator will be continuously evaluated to address new challenges and contexts.

Ukraine NGO Forum Secretariat will remain relatively autonomous and manage its activities itself, with the overall guidance from the Ukraine NGO Forum Steering Committee. Impartial representation outside of individual NGOs, will be provided as required and delivered through the Secretariat. The Secretariat will continue to manage and deliver core functions/services of the Ukrainian platform. Of utmost importance is that appropriate space and freedom, under the guidance of the Steering Committee, is continuously given for the overall facilitation to successfully being able to conduct their jobs. Moreover, that the Secretariat are able to receive adequate resources for the role it is expected to perform. This has not necessarily been the case in the past, which has hampered the overall effectiveness.

It is suggested that further improvements should be made toward achieving clear governance systems to ensure accountability of the secretariat, and further refine a clear role, mandate and responsibilities of the Secretariat. In particular, efforts should be made to discuss and define the right of initiative as well as independence on part of the Secretariat, in relationship with the Steering Committee.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Ukraine NGO Forum is currently staffed with 7 positions, one international and 6 national staff. It includes program manager, information manager, capacity building manager, HR/Admin/Finance officer, regional coordinator, administrative assistant and NGO Forum Director. Ukraine NGO Forum wants to ensure that its principle resource - its employees – are fully supported in an organizational environment that promotes results through performance and knowledge sharing, both internally and externally. The Human Resource policy will at this stage be based on DRC policies.

The activities of Ukraine NGO Forum will as previously and when relevant draw on human expertise and resources from member organizations, when available and possible. External human resources, outside the membership base, including consultancies will also be drawn up when relevant.

The staff roles within Ukraine NGO Forum will have to continue to reflect its cross functional way of working, to adjust to contextual and programmatic challenges, which will require significant skills and competencies of its staff.

Correspondingly, Ukraine NGO Forum, in cooperation with its Steering Committee, will ensure robust selection process to ensure that individuals have the right competencies and personal skill sets for the organization.



FUNDING STRATEGY

The start-up costs for Ukraine NGO Forum was minimal as its coordination efforts, since it built solely on voluntary contributions in terms of human resources of its members. To its members and its original founding members, i.e. Danish Refugee Council, Save the Children International and People in Need, it quickly became an unsurmountable task. With the decision to have independent and a more formalized coordination platform, with increased number of tasks, services and needs identified by its members comes also additional funding requirements. Nonetheless, the primary concern is and will continue to be ensuring the financial sustainability of the platform, and balance the task in relation to funding available to Ukraine NGO Forum at any given time.

The general Ukrainian context, especially the development of the current conflict, will significantly influence the funding strategy and possibly the financial stability.

One of the main strategic priorities as described above is to ensure both diversification in terms of number of donors as well as potentially related to channeling organizations, which is needed to maintain as well as strengthen the sustainability, capacity, as well as the perception of neutrality. During 2015 only two organizations functioned as channeling organizations, with only one major donor (ECHO) contributing funds. Nonetheless, numerous non-contributing donors benefitted indirectly from the coordination and capacity building efforts funded through ECHO.

Donor relations must be carefully managed to avoid the Ukraine NGO Forum platform becoming a direct tool of donor or national policy. Association with a particular donor may be perceived as compromising the independence and neutrality of Ukraine NGO Forum and its members. Furthermore, a range of donors spreads the risk of collapse should one donor withdraw their support; it also adds credibility through demonstrating confidence from a wider range of actors. At the same time this has significant operational benefits, which would facilitate coordination, attaining synergies as well as avoiding overlaps.

The same can be said for the issue of channeling funds through only one or two NGO members, which up until now has been the case. This could potentially lead to NGOs who receiving the initial funds having a more dominant or leadership role as the holder of the donor contract, especially dangerous when leadership within secretariat or steering committee are perceived as weak.

Ukraine NGO Forum will look at four primary strategies for funding, which will be combined to achieve platform sustainability.

Traditional donor support will be sought for direct implementation of current action, such as advocacy, coordination, capacity building and information sharing. Firstly, it is suggested that a significant part of this funding will be channeled through member organizations, as some donors with an interest in providing funding for Ukraine NGO Forum, will have requirements of general framework agreements or other technical requirements which can at this stage not be met by the Ukraine NGO forum. Secondly, bilateral or cluster project partnerships will be sought with member organizations in cases where the capabilities and competence have added value and synergies



can be found. Thirdly, Ukraine NGO Forum will also seek direct project funding from donors able to provide such.

Fourthly, Ukraine NGO Forum members have decided on a subscription fee linked to the membership of the forum. The level of the current subscription fee can be seen as low, but needs to be linked to the direct benefit of the platform and its services. It is suggested that the membership should be raised for larger NGOs with the overall goal that such payments should cover at least one national position, i.e. the national coordinator. Furthermore, it is also suggested that subscription should be given on a yearly basis, instead of the current 6 month period, to be more cost effective.

Subscription in combination with criteria and core values that guarantees their membership, in return for which members receive the right to benefit from services provided by Ukraine NGO Forum. Furthermore, this fee actually demonstrates that the effort of coordinated efforts, joint advocacy as well as direct services provided is worth pursuing, since it is concrete proof of the value members attach to the forum, and creates credibility as a result. It is also funding which allows for greater independence, as well as greater ownership and belonging on part of the members.

Nonetheless, even considering a potential raise in membership fees it will not cover more a fraction of core costs, for 2016 it is estimated that 2% of the actual costs will be contributed by the members, and therefore need to be seen as in combination with other types of funding.

Ukraine NGO Forum has decided not to set membership fees on an equitable basis, with the particular intention to encourage membership amongst national NGOs.

It is foreseen that the Ukraine NGO Forum platform will be perceived to add tangible value to coordination and constructive relationships as well as the development and maintenance of same with the donor community, which long term will facilitate the access to financial means.

Ukraine NGO Forum also intends to reach out to members, as well as possibly national governments, requesting secondment of core staff, in particular related to international staffing, i.e. the senior coordinator. By seconding core staff to support Ukraine NGO Forum, (either full- or part-time), larger NGOs can absorb running costs in their budgets.

Although additional donor support will still be needed, this suggested approach is considered positive and responsible for long-term sustainability and risk minimization if managed well.

UKRAINE NGO FORUM WORKPLAN

A work plan will be developed and continuously updated, based on available resources for Ukraine NGO Forum. The work plan will introduce specific result indicators, aimed at effectively demonstrating to members and other stakeholders that Ukraine NGO Forum is making a



difference in pursuit of principles, objectives and priorities by placing an emphasis on clearly defined and evaluable results.

The outcomes of the work plan will be monitored by the Ukraine NGO Forum's membership through regular progress reports presented by the Steering Committee to the members every six months. At the same time, the Steering Committee will regularly monitor the progress of the work plan through detailed updates from the Secretariat at every Steering Committee meeting. This more detailed monitoring will be measured according to the concrete deliverables included in the work plan.

Please see annex 1 for the work plan for the next 6 month period.

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Given the number of actors involved in activities of Ukraine NGO Forum, it remains critical that coordination is explicitly considered also from an evaluation perspective, where specific lessons can be drawn for future coordination.

The work of Ukraine NGO Forum focusing on evaluation and monitoring work will member organizations, the Board, and donors with better means for learning from past experience of the work we do. Our evaluation and monitoring efforts will focus on overall result through improving program delivery, planning, and allocation of resources. The monitoring will also be useful for demonstrating results as part of accountability of Ukraine NGO Forum to its key stakeholders. Through evaluation and monitoring, Ukraine NGO Forum will be able to document what we do, why, and following up on what works, what enables learning and informed decision-making.

Ukraine NGO Forum will adopt a systemic approach of regular evaluations of all activities as well as related to its overall role, for the purpose of provide relevant services as well as being able to improve the same.

Determining the need and usefulness of Ukraine NGO Forum is imperative to ensure positive impact and outcomes of such coordination, as well as the acceptance, commitment, and participation of its members.