

Charity  
**in times of  
coronavirus**



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## Key trends in the charity sector

The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting crisis in general have an ambiguous impact on charity. Current situation has both positive and negative consequences.

One of the most noticeable positive developments is the **surge of charitable and volunteer initiatives in Ukraine.**

The new challenges provoked by the crisis contributed to the advancement of volunteer movement that seemed to be gradually declining after it reached its peak back in 2014. International donors and national business entities also engaged into countering the coronavirus as they allocated a good deal of money to overcome the effects of COVID-19.

But it's not just about money. During the lockdown, **people have more free time, and many are committed to devote this time to volunteer activities.** "While earlier, we used to call people and ask for help, now they contact us and offer their help," says one of the leaders of a charitable foundation from Zhytomyr oblast. "People are more likely to respond to requests for help, easier to get united. They have become more open and kinder," adds a representative of a charitable foundation from Kirovohrad oblast.

Such changes showcase the **avenues for increased popularity of charity in the future.** “Once you try yourself as a philanthropist, it is difficult to stop. This is becoming a habit,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv.

In addition, today those who were active in 2014 – the experienced ones – are returning to the charity. After the 2020 crisis, there will be more experienced volunteers and philanthropists in Ukraine for sure.

The **negative consequences** include financial factors.

**First, the economic downturn that accompanies the crisis has led to dropping incomes and rising unemployment in the country.** As a result, the demand for humanitarian assistance has risen sharply, while the revenues from the population and small businesses – that have often been used for these purposes – are rapidly declining. “People and businesses are not sure about their future, so they try not to spend too much,” explains a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine. “Everyone who could do something has already done everything. And it feels like they have exhausted their resources. People are holding on to their savings,” adds her colleague from the Southern region.

**Second, philanthropists got additional items of expenses,** such as protective means for their employees and beneficiaries. As these means have risen in price, the final beneficiaries receive less cash assistance.

**Third, there are concerns about declining donations in the future,** as there is a very high risk that the capacity of business and population will be exhausted after the crisis, especially given excessively high charitable spending through the pandemic.

But it is not just the matter of reducing donations, as a representative of one of the Western Ukrainian charitable funds emphasizes. Oftentimes, we do not notice the 'quiet' in-kind charity. "Restaurants and markets usually feed the homeless people. Today they are closed, and the homeless people have to look for other sources of livelihood. Their situation is exacerbated by the fact that charitable canteens near churches have been closed due to the lockdown," explains one of the respondents. Therefore, **the pressure on the charitable sector is growing, while the resources – both financial and human – are limited.**

In addition, as many representatives of charitable funds underline, **there has been a significant shift in the priorities of donors.** It is about increasing funding for projects aimed at overcoming the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, which in turn leads to underfunding of projects aimed at other goals: culture, education, community development, etc.

“We abandoned the development programs and returned to humanitarian projects,” says a representative of a charitable fund from the Donbas. Her colleague from Kyiv confirms: “Education and culture projects have been frozen in our country. The book project in schools has stopped – they have started producing the content.” “We have refocused all our efforts on health issues. We were to help the injured, we had an agreement with the doctors, but then the crisis came. The projects were put on hold. We have switched to the coronavirus,” says a representative of the fund majoring in helping and rehabilitating military servants.

Most charitable organizations had to change the usual algorithms and modalities of operation that they have developed over the years – it concerns fundraising, communication and forms of assistance provision. Some areas of work are simply impossible to develop today. For example, it is true for legal aid that has been suspended due to the suspension of the courts. Some activities, such as trainings, consultations, advocacy campaigns, had to be transferred into an online format, which is not always an effective and reliable way.



**“These are the volunteer groups rather than charitable organizations that have become more active. The crisis has not become an impetus for institutional development,”**

warns a representative of a charitable fund from Kyiv.

At the same time, neither of these consequences is exclusively positive or negative. For example, the growing number of volunteer initiatives in Ukraine – notwithstanding its seemingly positive nature – may have a number of negative consequences.

Volunteer initiative often does not go beyond an amateur effort – it diverts resources from the market of professional charities that have already worked out over the years their processes and quality databases of those in need, and spends it at its discretion – often irrationally – due to lack of experience and misunderstanding of market needs. **The spread of non-systemic initiatives causes a kind of chaos.** “Initiative groups went at bringing food. But they don't have the lists of those in need. Some were brought food five times a week, and some never received it. And it is not clear whether the supply of food will continue after the surge,” says a representative of a charitable organization from Western Ukraine.

In addition, volunteer initiatives often do not report on the money spent. It undermines public confidence in charity in general. Of course, there is a risk of non-integrity organizations.

Yet another negative consequence of the lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic is the need to restructure the usual tried and true algorithms.



First, it caused some stress to the organizations. However, over time, **it became clear that innovations helped streamline the processes, master new technologies, expand audiences by moving to online formats, and ultimately helped elevate team spirit through the ability to work together to meet new challenges.**

“The crisis is a growth area. We have gained additional competencies, a new spurt in growth,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv.

**The current crisis seems to have highlighted the systemic problems around charity in Ukraine.**

The cooperation between the charitable sector and the state still raises a lot of concerns. **Official institutions tend to shift their problems and shortcomings onto the charitable sector.** It is true not only for equipping the physicians and hospitals during the pandemic – that the charities and volunteer associations are currently focusing on – but also for the activities in sustainable areas. “COVID-19 and the economic crisis have highlighted systemic problems in the health care system. Government funding for the procurement of cancer drugs has declined. National public procurement plans for 2020 have not been approved. Procurement has not started. There will be no tenders until the end of summer. And the focus of the Ministry of Health is now exclusively on COVID-19,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv complains. Therefore, the number of requests to the charity sector is expected to increase.

In addition, **poor coordination of the government agencies with charitable foundations** is worth mentioning – for example, when the relevant departments of government agencies take long months to collect information that the charities need to build effective work.

**In Ukraine, ‘gray’ or semi-official charity is still more profitable.** It is about doing charity without official accounting, audits, etc. Representatives of charitable organizations note with annoyance that it is more efficient in our reality. For example, it was only possible to officially procure protective means during the lockdown from the *Epicenter* stores (id est., pay money from the bank account), so most suppliers preferred cash payment. Such circumstances mostly demoralize organizations that try to “play by the rules.” “Charity is not about volunteering. We have to play by all the rules of the economy. The key rule is do no harm. There are people who study for three years to run a charity, and some come and do not even want to understand the processes. Why not go work with a charity that has a good network?”, a respondent – representative of a charitable organization from Western Ukraine – shares her pain.

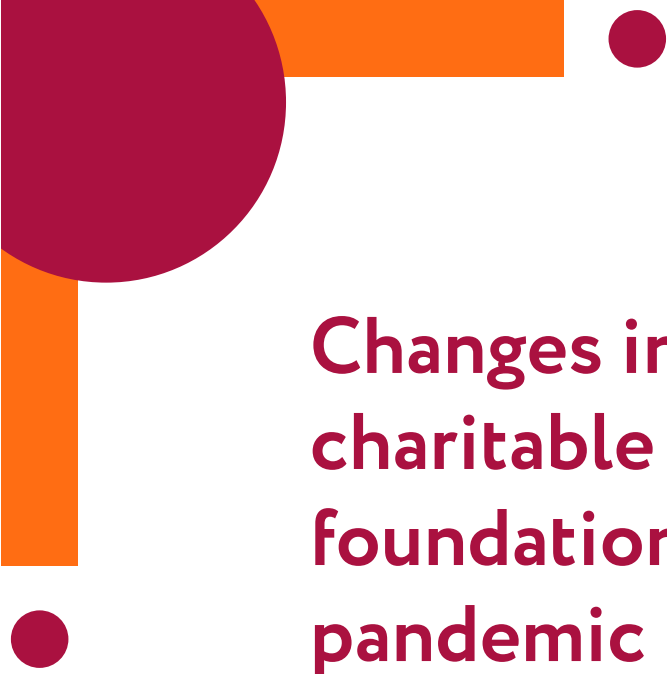
**Problems with the institutional culture of charitable organizations have become more visible.** Many of them switch their attention and efforts to trendy areas for the sake of better image, forgetting about their mission.

Of course, this is detrimental to beneficiaries who relied on regular assistance. “We switched to coronavirus. Part of the projects was suspended. We used to help counter-sniper units. And those who are at the frontline. It’s just that the resources for regular projects are lacking a bit,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine.

However, it is not worth only focusing on negative trends in the charity sector. After all, as everyone knows, what does not kill us makes us stronger. A representative of one of Ukraine’s biggest charitable foundations explained this aspect of the crisis’ impact on charity very aptly: “The epidemic has become a good indicator of how civil society can respond to the crisis. This is a strength test for many organizations. It enabled us to express ourselves. It has proved that this sector is able to support the society.”

### Challenges facing charities in Ukraine:

- ● poor coordination of the government agencies with charitable foundations;
- ● so-called ‘gray’ or semi-official charity is still more profitable;
- ● poor institutional culture of charitable organizations has become more visible.



# Changes in the operation of charitable organizations and foundations due to the Covid pandemic

## Scopes and directions of operation

It is emblematic that **the workload of charitable organizations has increased significantly.** Today, they are at the forefront of countering the pandemic, providing protection for doctors and hospitals. “COVID-related expenses were added. We buy means of protection. We help with the transportation of medical staff,” says a representative of a well-known national charity about the activities of his organization. “We have been working without days-off for two months, from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., because we take care of 40 hospitals,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine that majors in helping medical institutions. “Usually we help the military, but now we provide doctors with protection. Now they cost you a fortune, and it is difficult to buy them. Our submariners have perfected their masks, and we now supply them to the hospital. The doctors are happy,” adds their colleague.

In addition, **charities have taken on the full burden of overcoming the effects of lockdown.**

“We have more work, as many more people are asking for help today,” says a representative of a charitable organization from a small town in Western Ukraine. First of all, it is about financial resources (for example, the provision of humanitarian aid), because during the crisis, many families found themselves in dire circumstances.

“We have received requests that we did not have earlier – from women with many children and low-income families. The matter is that children used to have lunch in schools, but now schools are closed, so families simply do not have enough food,” notes a representative of a charitable foundation from Central Ukraine that patronizes women in difficult life circumstances.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown have non-material consequences in many areas of life. “The COVID pandemic is a pandemic of violence,” says a representative of a charity from Eastern Ukraine.

“We have more work. While earlier, one of the spouses went to work and could avoid the risk, now people are locked up at home. The violence has increased.”

**The charities have more work also due to the need to introduce new formats of operation in accordance with the lockdown restrictions.** For example, a representative of a charitable foundation from the Donbas says, “We stopped some activities because you can’t transfer everything online. But we got new work – transferring our operations online and writing project proposals.”

After all, the problems that the charitable foundations worked to overcome before the pandemic did not disappear with its onset. “As for the areas of work, we have not undergone drastic changes. Because we have our mission, our vision. But we added the component on COVID-19. Funds are being allocated for disinfectants, a project on employment (sewing masks) has been launched,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine concludes.

### **Changes in the operation of charitable organizations and foundations:**

- ● the workload of charitable organizations has increased significantly;
- ● more people are asking for help;
- ● charities have taken on the full burden of overcoming the effects of lockdown;
- ● charities have introduced new formats of operation.

### Fundraising

The growing number of requests to charities and foundations makes the need for additional financing obvious. However, given the economic crisis, it is not that easy to find.

The organizations that raised funds from the population through creative solutions – such as collection and recycling of plastic, collection, restoration and sale of used clothing, fundraising during mass events, fundraising through charity stores – now find themselves in the most difficult situation. **During the lockdown, they lost the opportunity to implement sustainable donation modalities. Therefore, they had to suspend work or look for new fundraising formats**, such as mobilizing new donors, opening online stores, etc. “We earn our living. This is a new type of charity: we collect unnecessary things, restore them, then either give them to the poor or sell them and keep the community with this money. During the lockdown period, our charities are closed, so we have no income. We get mobilized. Our beneficiaries go to dig gardens, settled down to clean streets. We started writing various projects proposals to other charitable foundations. We are supported by the population: people bring food, hygiene products. The store was transferred to Instagram,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine that takes care of homeless people shares her experience. “We used to raise funds through public charity events. We can’t conduct them now.

Charitable garage sales, master classes, so-called cat fairs – all of these has stopped. The number and amount of contributions from the population decreased by 50%. Thus, we can't keep our animals. We try to sell stuff online, try to sew sunbeds for people. We are transferring our activities online," adds a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine that takes care of homeless animals.

It is not easy for organizations that received the lion's share of their donations from the population and small businesses. "We have to look for new philanthropists in new areas and through new mechanisms. For the past five weeks, we have had no revenue from small and medium businesses that used to provide up to 20% of donations. Big business has cut social programs. And those who still keep them are directing their aid to counteract COVID-19," shares a representative of a well-known national fund headquartered in Kyiv. "People are tired. The donations we used to collect locally have declined. Donor funds go to large international organizations, and it is difficult for medium-sized ones to receive funds," adds her colleague from Eastern Ukraine.

In these difficult conditions, a lot of charitable organizations and foundations began to write more project proposals and participate in calls for grant proposals more actively. On the other hand, **due to the increase in the number of grant applications, competition for resources is increasing, and a significant part of such applications remains unsupported.**



“Funding for grant programs has decreased. Demand for programs has increased, competition has increased, and projects are failing,” explains a representative of a charity from Eastern Ukraine.

At the same time, large organizations working with international donors feel more confident than ever, as they receive not only sustainable funding for the planned projects, but also additional funding through new programs aimed at overcoming the effects of the pandemic. “Funding from international donors has increased because there are programs to overcome the effects of the pandemic. Revenues from the population, government, and business have disappeared. Internal fundraising is actually dead,” sums up a representative of a charity from Eastern Ukraine.

Notwithstanding the difficult times for many charities, none of them have yet reduced staff due to limited funding. But if the pandemic continues, some charitable organizations and foundations will be forced to respond to the situation, including reviewing staff policies. Another representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine says, “So far, nothing has changed in our country. But our organizations will pay 70% of salary starting from June 1, and if nothing changes, we will go reduce salaries to 50% from September 1.”

## Fundraising in times of coronavirus:

### — ● **Not relevant:**

- | collection and recycling of plastic;
- | collection, restoration and sale of used clothing;
- | offline fundraising events;
- | fundraising through charity stores;
- | charitable garage sales;
- | offline educational events.

### — ● **Relevant:**

- | grant programs;
- | project activities;
- | collaboration with international donors;
- | online activities.

The increase in workload and lack of funding are certainly not the only challenges that charitable organizations and foundations face due to the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdown restrictions. **The real challenge for large charities was the transition to remote work.** “It has become more difficult to work, to maintain the involvement of employees and team spirit,” admits a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv. “We stopped having meetings. We only meet in Zoom. The level of activity has dropped. We used to have meetings, plans. And now, not everyone has the opportunity to even meet in Zoom,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine claims. “Communication between the departments has become more difficult. The employees have lower motivation,” sadly says a representative of a charitable foundation located in Kyiv.

Staff of the charities also face the **usual household** problems. After all, they – like many Ukrainian families – oftentimes have to work from home with their children, and sometimes share a laptop with them. “There was a period of adaptation until we synchronized the schedules so that the work would not intersect with the children’s classes,” recalls a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

At the same time, medium and small charities passed this stage quite calmly, because even before the pandemic and the lockdown, they often practiced remote work. And charitable organizations in smaller towns of Ukraine did not notice any inconveniences at all.

“We meet in person. We work from the same place where we live. So, there is no need to gather online,” explains a representative of a small charity from a town in Western Ukraine.

**Communication went remote not only between the employees of organizations, but also between the philanthropists and their beneficiaries** (the remote modality was introduced to protect both employees and beneficiaries against the risk of coronavirus infection). Some types of assistance that previously entailed contact – education, training, counseling – have mostly been transferred online. However, it required development of new technologies and adaptation of materials. “At first, we felt some stress, and the work slowed down for a while due to the need to change the format of activities,” says a coordinator of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine. “Going online took more time for gaining new skills, learning to work in new software. It took us certain time to adjust,” adds her colleague from Central Ukraine. However, most representatives of charitable organizations quickly mastered necessary software and got back to the ranks.

However, **according to representatives of many charities, the transition to remote work is accompanied by a number of difficulties in terms of interaction between the employees and the beneficiaries.** “People in difficult circumstances do not have gadgets, and the elderly do not have necessary skills to use the software,” notes a representative of a charity that cares for the elderly.

Similarly, a representative of a foundation that helps children with cancer says that there is a problem with the resource and technical support to the hospital units. There is a need for the Internet and screens. “The Internet is not available everywhere. In the “grey area” in Eastern Ukraine, the quality of the Internet is poor, and 70% do not have it there at all,” adds a representative of a charitable foundation majoring on the protection of women’s rights. This problem is mostly relevant to rural residents.

The organizations that decided to increase their **online presence** during the crisis faced a huge challenge. Creating a professional product outside the regional center is quite a problem. “There is a lack of specialists who could make video sports. It costs money,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from the district center in Eastern Ukraine. Moreover, creating a quality product requires considerable effort and creativity. A representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine shares her new experience, “We had to transfer education online. And we need to understand how to transfer the support to people online. It’s a visibility challenge.”

**Fundraising through online activities** deserves special focus. Organizations that have tried to implement it lack experience and knowledge to swiftly launch effective mechanisms. “It's more difficult to attract customers on the Internet.

The Facebook marketplace for sales doesn't work very well. The link sometimes gets inactive, and it makes no sense to create an online store for such a short time,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine.

Another major challenge associated with transferring activities online is the **loss of emotional live contact** – something intangible that inspires staff of the charities and often their beneficiaries. “It's difficult – working directly with a person gives joy, but it doesn't work this way for online. And it's hard for the children, because they are at school through Zoom, and they also have to use Zoom to connect with us. Our children's center was a place where a child could divert his/her attention from the phone, from the Internet,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine notes with regret.

However, **a lot of charitable organizations and foundations have not been able to switch to remote work** – sometimes it is simply impossible to do so. It was the most difficult for the organizations that provide care for the elderly. “It is impossible to suspend home care for the elderly, because they are often low-mobile persons. On the other hand, they are a risk group. At first, we were confused, because we have a lot of service projects. We've reduced the number of visits from five to two. We provide more consultations by phone.

We do not bring products in their apartments, but leave them on the doorstep,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine describes the changes in her work. This problem is also faced by organizations that distribute food kits, respond to domestic violence, and provide hospitals with everything they need.

Working directly with people during the lockdown has prompted most organizations to **develop new safety protocols for the employees and the beneficiaries.** The biggest organizations paid attention not only to the elements of physical security (wearing masks, disinfection, keeping distance), but also to electronic security. After all, preserving information and personal data of beneficiaries in the new conditions has become a challenge. “We run group classes with a psychologist, so we have to make sure that the recording does not get online,” explains a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv.

**For many charities, the transportation complicated by the lockdown has become a major challenge.** “It is difficult to approach the beneficiary and help him or her. Our offices are divided between the regions. The vehicles returned to the headquarters in Kyiv,” tells a representative of a charitable foundation based in Eastern Ukraine. “We had to allocate additional funds to provide transportation of our beneficiaries to the hospital if they feel worse, and to transport the doctors who have to come to the hospital to help our beneficiaries,” recalls a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

**The implementation of programs for treatment abroad and supply of medicines from abroad** has become extremely difficult, as many countries are not ready to accept foreign patients, and the transportation of the persons in serious condition by aid has become a difficult task.

It is not only the transportation of patients or staff that became an issue. That is also true for the transportation of medicines and other material assistance. Charitable foundations found themselves in a situation when they had to find new solutions to continue operations. A representative of the national foundation says, “We have conducted negotiations with *Ukrposhta* to get discounts on the shipment of medicines through the national postal services.”

No need to argue **that the success of charitable organizations in times of crisis largely depends on their flexibility and willingness to respond to change. For some, it was a shock**, such as for a small charity in Western Ukraine whose representative says, “The lockdown has stopped our work. We used to involve children from regular schools and take them to boarding schools, but now the schools are closed. We cooperated with the churches, and now they are closed. Business can’t help. We don’t know if we will be able to congratulate the war veterans this year.” **And for some, the crisis has opened up new opportunities.**



The position of the majority of respondents surveyed was most aptly expressed by one of the representatives of a well-known foundation from Western Ukraine: “We cannot call it a crisis. It is just a different format of work.”


**Among the positive changes caused by the crisis, representatives of charitable foundations mentioned the growth of territorial coverage and quantitative coverage of the audience due to online formats.**

“Our animators were among the first to go to Facebook and Zoom, they created groups and platforms there. While we used to cover 20-30 children offline, now we have 800 subscribers in one group. We are actively covering children in the “grey area,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine.

**In general, the crisis has prompted organizations to become more active online.** “Our online presence has grown. There are additional communication platforms where the people receive assistance. We also conduct webinars,” says a representative of a national charitable foundation. “We started making videos, providing online consultations, conducting online trainings. We created a Facebook support group for women,” adds her colleague from Eastern Ukraine. “We started all the communications we wanted to have in the communities, launching them even more actively online. We started shooting motivational videos, writing longreads and posts,” a representative of a Western Ukraine-based foundation shares.

Representatives of charitable organizations consider the **mastering and – in some cases – the procurement of new software** to be another benefit of current situation.

According to the respondents, yet another important positive aspect of the crisis' impact on charitable organizations is the **improved team spirit in the organization**. "I was once again assured of the strength of my team," emphasizes an employee of a small charity in Central Ukraine.



**"This is a test of our efficiency and effectiveness. Because from the first day, we did not let our work drop. We have revealed our capacity, proved that when a problem arises at the national level, charitable organizations help the state,"**

says a representative of a large Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

Finally, **the lockdown prompted charitable foundations to pilot new things and learn, to do what they could not do under regular circumstances**. It means that new interesting ideas and bold decisions are born.

“We have discovered a new format of work – remote work. Now I see how it is possible to work more efficiently when the lockdown is over,” says a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation. “To be effective, you have to learn. The lockdown has forced us to focus on this more. So that after the lockdown, we can better provide services to our clients,” her colleague from Central Ukraine agrees. “We thought about new areas of work. We try to work with education (online education). And we also understood that Zoom significantly optimizes costs,” an employee of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine summarizes.

### **Fundraising changes during the quarantine:**

- ● Organizations lost the opportunity of offline fundraising and are looking for new formats.
- ● Small and medium-sized enterprises can't provide financial support to civil society organizations like they used before, however, the need for funding couldn't be more relevant than it is today.
- ● Organizations and foundations are interested in grants.



## Social capital and cooperation in the charity sector

Crisis impacts the relations in the charity sector. Interestingly, **the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions had a mostly positive impact on the cooperation of charitable organizations.**

This is especially true for organizations that have joined the work of local coordination headquarters against the COVID-19. “Cooperation has become closer as the coordination center for countering COVID has been established. Therefore, those who work in this field have better connection with each other. Because it is a constant flow of information and coordination,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine. “There is a big advantage that we have made friends with fellow volunteers. Complex logistics need organizational cooperation,” adds a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine.

At the same time, cooperation in the humanitarian aid sector has been quite active.

"Our colleagues had to close the canteen for the poor. That's why they gave food to our beneficiary families," says a representative of a large charitable foundation in Central Ukraine. A representative of a Western Ukraine-based charity tells a similar story: "Many charitable organizations that fed people have closed because they cannot keep social distance. Their clients come to us. That's why these organizations started coming to us with food."

Organizations also cooperate when they feel that they cannot meet the requests of beneficiaries alone. In this case, charitable foundations either refer those who need help to colleagues, or join forces to address the problem. "We started cooperating more with colleagues. When there is a problem that we cannot address, we refer the beneficiaries to them," explains a representative of a small Eastern Ukraine-based charitable foundation. "We have started to cooperate more actively with *the Ukrainian Philanthropic Marketplace* to raise funds," adds her colleague from Kyiv. A representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine describes the details of cooperation: "We had a lot of cooperation. In Lviv oblast, 4,000 children were returned from boarding schools to their families. So, we teamed up with four organizations and divided the areas to visit."

However, about a half of the respondents say that the pandemic did not affect their cooperation with colleagues in any way, as it was quite active even before the crisis.


**At the same time, cooperation of charitable organizations with business has not changed for better.**

Large and medium-sized charitable foundations agree that the businesses have suffered from the lockdown, capabilities of business have been reduced, and those companies that donate money are too focused on counteracting COVID-19. “It became more difficult to work. The business has no confidence in the future, and it has switched to countering COVID-19,” explains a representative of a big charitable foundation from Kyiv. “Our partners and sponsors are already financially exhausted. Now it is even improper to address them,” her colleague adds.

But small charities are less skeptical. Some of them claim that business support has decreased, but there are those who – on the contrary – have received additional support. “They make advances, some have even become more active. It is more about responsible attitudes rather than donating a lot of money,” explains a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

**Cooperation of charitable organizations with business has not changed for better. Causes:**

- ● the businesses have suffered from the lockdown;
- ● capabilities of business have been reduced;
- ● companies are focused on counteracting COVID-19.



**“Our partners and sponsors are already financially exhausted. Now it is even improper to address them,”**

explains a representative of a big charitable foundation from Kyiv.

**Instead, cooperation of charitable foundations with the state intensified during the crisis – but mainly in the format of the charitable sector providing assistance to local and national authorities.** “We are trying to work with the Ministry of Health, the Center for Public Health. Cooperation has intensified. The state is counting on our help,” says a representative of a national charitable foundation. “Relations have become closer and better. Authorities started taking the charities more seriously, as they submit requests for help. They are asking for help because they understand our capabilities, our mobility,” adds her colleague from a charitable foundation located in Eastern Ukraine.

Staff of the charities say that **since the beginning of the crisis, the authorities have tried to involve charities as much as possible in decision-making and in addressing the problems they face.** “In 2014, the authorities did not accept assistance. Now everything is different. Today, the authorities have already understood everything and called for help immediately. Coordination with the authorities has improved significantly. A daily briefing is conducted with the head of State Oblast Administration,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine that majors on the protection of women’s rights.

We were invited to the headquarters on combatting the pandemic, where they discussed assistance to the poor,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine that helps the homeless people. “We began to communicate more closely with the regional and municipal authorities. Even our volunteer helped the regional department to supervise procurement and tenders,” the head of a charitable foundations from Kyiv proudly emphasizes.

However, there were sporadic mentions that the authorities sometimes do not adequately deliver on their side. “We are faced with the fact that the state system is awkward. The authorities put our procurement in the corner,” complains a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine. “We have been waiting for the lists from the authorities for more than a month,” adds a representative of a Western Ukraine-based charity.

**Another obstacle for the sector was the unwillingness of the authorities to quickly address emerging challenges.**

For example, certain charitable organizations were ready to move to electronic document flow to minimize personal contacts, but medical institutions refused to do so.

At the same time, it is difficult not to notice that **in other areas, the state’s cooperation with the non-governmental sector has become less intense.** “It is difficult to contact current leadership of the Ministry of Health – they only think about the coronavirus,” says a representative of the national charity.



“Our contacts have become closer due to the establishment of the IDP Council. But the documents have not been not signed for a month, and probably it is due to the crisis,” adds his colleague from Eastern Ukraine.

### Cooperation of charitable foundations with the state:

- ● the charitable sector provide assistance to local and national authorities;
- ● the government have tried to involve charities as much as possible in decision-making and in addressing the problems they face;
- ● in non-COVID-19 areas, the state’s cooperation with the non-governmental sector has become less intense.

### **Cooperation of the charitable sector with the media in the new realities differs significantly depending on the size of the organization and the areas of its operation.**

Large charitable foundations with an annual turnover of over UAH 10 million mostly do not notice significant changes in relations with the media, because, before the crisis they built systemic cooperation with them. “It [cooperation] was quite good even before the crisis,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine.

Nevertheless, representatives of charitable organizations noted that journalists had shifted their focus mainly to coronavirus.

“Cooperation [with the media] has not changed much. It may have become a little less intense, as the focus has shifted to COVID-19,” says a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation that cares for children with cancer. “It became easier. We cover the problems through the lenses of coronavirus,” her colleague from a foundation with similar focus shares her experience.

On the contrary, medium-sized charitable organizations with an annual turnover of UAH 1 to 10 million notice an increase in media attention to the charitable sector. “They did start noticing us. They often call us,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine. “They did become more active. They are interested in whether we work, what problems we face, how we overcome them,” a respondent from Western Ukraine confirms. Their colleague from Kyiv sums up: “Media started reporting about our work more often. Because the topic is relevant.”

Small charities with a turnover of less than UAH 1 million per year are much less likely to cooperate with the media. “We do not have well-established systemic cooperation,” admits a representative of a Kyiv-based charity. Those who still have constant contact with journalists note an increase in attention to their charities as soon as they deal with COVID-19 and a declined attention if the charities have other priorities. “I and my colleagues get invitations less often,” says a representative of a charity that specializes in combating violence. “If they used to invite us to speak on the air, now it has decreased,” says a representative of a charity that takes care of homeless animals.

## Cooperation of the charitable sector with the media

### Large charitable organizations (with an annual turnover of more than UAH 10 mln):



they don't notice significant changes;



before the crisis they built systemic cooperation with the media;



journalists had shifted their focus mainly to coronavirus.

### Medium-sized charitable organizations (with an annual turnover of UAH 1 to 10 million):



the increase of attention to the charitable sector;



journalists express their interest in the organization's activities, problems they face, and how they overcome them.

### Small charitable organizations (with an annual turnover of up to UAH 1 million)



they don't have well-established systemic cooperation;




an increase in attention to their charities as soon as they deal with COVID-19;



declined attention if the charities have other priorities.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, **public confidence in charitable organizations also underwent a transformation.** Still, it would be premature to report any significant changes, warns one of the respondents – a representative of a national charitable foundation:



**“I do not feel any changes, but if we survive, the trust in us will increase. We are on the hotspot now.” And eventually, trust is not something that is formed in the blink of an eye. “Charitable organizations have been gaining trust for a long time. And the crisis does not affect it,”**

says a representative of a small foundation from Western Ukraine.

At the same time, some charitable organizations still note an increase in public confidence in the charitable sector, especially against the background of the government’s inability to help people in a critical situation. “The situation has not changed significantly, but the attitude has become a little warmer,” says the head of a small foundation from Central Ukraine, “The authorities underperformed in this crisis, and it became clear that charitable organizations are more effective.” “There is more trust, because we are more capable than the government. And people are more honest with us than with the authorities,” says her colleague from a neighboring region.

A representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation agrees with them: “Trust has grown, because when a problem arises, people understand who they can rely on.”

The society have really got more problems. **Charitable organizations record an increase in the number of requests for protection against COVID-19** – masks, protective suits, tests, ventilators. Much more humanitarian aid is needed – food, hygiene, medicines, clothing. Transportation and Internet communication in rural areas are in demand. Sometimes, it is not even about the lack of money, but the fact that some things are difficult to buy, especially in the regions. “People ask for cushions for bedsores for the elderly, diapers. The matter is that many facilities are closed, so it’s difficult to get it,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from a small town in Western Ukraine.

**Beneficiaries need more social support – employment or resettlement assistance, basic assistance in addressing household problems.** “In our oblast, the number of the unemployed has increased by 40%,” says a representative of a charitable foundation in one of Southern oblasts of Ukraine. “Those who lost their jobs in big cities could not pay for housing, and it became impossible to travel to home cities,” says a respondent about the situations faced by the charitable foundation in Kyiv that works with participants in the war in the Donbas. “Transportation is needed to receive medical services – for example, a social taxi for patients with hemodialysis. The demand for legal aid has increased due to the abolition of social benefits,” adds a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine.

## **The population also has increased need for**

**psychological assistance.** “Sometimes you just need to talk to someone, relieve tension, get rid of anxiety,” says a representative of a charitable foundation located in Central Ukraine. Of course, all these requests are satisfied from the budgets of charitable organizations. “First of all, we need money, because the number of requests from doctors is disproportionately high. We feel like a squirrel on a treadmill, and so far we are succeeding,” says a representative of a small charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine.

## **Smaller charities talk about the need to diversify financial revenues and to change the established financial**

**modalities.** “Probably we have to start up a social enterprise, process the collected recyclables on our own. It will give jobs to ex-military servants. We have to start fundraising. We need an affordable fundraising option, new financial mechanisms,” elaborates a representative of a charitable organization from Kyiv. “We need to send the business a message that we are also experts, and not just do what business wants. That is, we need money not only for the procurement of equipment, but also for administrative costs,” adds her colleague. And of course, it requires new knowledge. Therefore, a representative of an Eastern Ukraine-based charitable foundation emphasizes: “We would need additional training on writing project proposals.”

This category of charitable foundations often lacks media attention. After all, small organizations do not have enough energy, time and resources to establish systemic cooperation with the journalists. “We lack media support at the national level,” says the head of a Central Ukraine-based charitable foundation.

Instead, medium-sized and big charities are more likely to complain about the lack of specialists and knowledge. “We need good videographers, sound engineers – those who know how to make movies,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine. “We need additional consultations on the HIV epidemic in the context of COVID-19,” adds a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation. A colleague from a charitable foundation located in Central Ukraine continues, “We need computer skills and knowledge of basic software. We realized that every employee should master it. Before the lockdown, the requirements were not that high. Now we understand that new skills are necessary.” Respondents much less often mention the need for logistics, namely personal protective equipment, laptops, electric bicycles, Internet coverage, fuel, or at least the exemption from taxation (VAT, single social contribution) during the crisis.



# Anti-crisis recipe for charitable organizations

**How a charity should look like to stay effective in any crisis? The recipe for success is quite simple – it only takes ten tips:**

- ● Stable financial revenues.
- ● Flexibility, adaptability.
- ● Good reputation.
- ● High organizational culture.
- ● Strategic planning.
- ● Transparency.
- ● Commitment to ideas.
- ● Work with socially significant problems.
- ● Extensive volunteer network.
- ● Active communication.



According to many respondents of the survey, **stable financial revenues** are provided through their maximum diversification. “You’ve got to have a lot of donors. The more people and the lower the check, the more stable the organization is,” a representative of a big foundation shares her recipe. “Crowdfunding, fundraising diversification or one stable donor (such as Pinchuk, Akhmetov, USAID)” her colleague reveals the secret of their stability. After all, receiving money from a large corporation provides not only sufficient funds, but also access to human resources and PR support. Smaller charities believe that a guarantee of stable financial income is working with larger grant projects.

**Flexibility, adaptability** means a willingness to respond quickly to challenges, the ability to adapt to circumstances. It is also about the readiness of the team of a charity to innovate, their ability to find new solutions under constant transformations. “It is important whether there is a professional team capable of adapting to change,” says a representative of a large charitable foundation. “Flexibility and creativity are critical – it is about the ability to find new ways and means,” adds his colleague from Central Ukraine. “Staff should be active, ready for change, able to get involved and start something new,” says a representative of a medium-sized charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine.

The opinion that a charitable organization would successfully survive the crisis if it undertakes all the projects that are offered to it is less popular. These are mostly smaller charities that share it.

“Don’t refuse, as if it doesn’t suit us,” explains a representative of a charity from a small town in Western Ukraine. However, this opinion is debatable, because larger organizations still tend to believe that the charity should align its activities with its mission and vision.

There is a common belief that the flexibility of an organization increases if it expands the range of its activities.

**Good reputation** includes a long list of features. First of all, it is about the trust of the community. “Public support, fame, a high degree of trust, sustainable fundraising, more experience,” says a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation. For sure, all of these can be obtained only if you work actively for many years. Her colleague clarifies, “These are not new organizations. These are those that have a name, a brand, work experience, reliable partners.”

**High organizational culture** also has many components. First of all, this is strong, cohesive team of specialists. “The team in an organization should be like-minded. Not just people who perform their duties, but people who look in the same direction,” says a representative of an Eastern Ukraine-based charitable foundation. “There should be a team. The backbone of the organization. Unity. Like a fist. When everyone can replace everyone,” adds her colleague.

**Leadership** is extremely important for the organization. According to one respondent, there should be a leader who maintains relations with everyone and is not afraid to ask for support. He emphasizes, “Courage and optimism are important. We need a strong manager who is ready to innovate...”

Representatives of large charitable foundations underline the importance of proper processes within the organization. “It is critical to focus on what the organization looks like, how the processes are set up. Adaptive internal processes... ;” “It is important to have well-established internal communication, well-established internal processes,” these are just a few considerations of representatives of charitable organizations.

**Attention to the development and training of staff is something that can ensure stability of an organization during the crisis.** According to the respondents, investing in the development and motivation of staff will create a team that can quickly refocus in times of crisis. At the same time, knowledge of your target audience (customer orientation) will contribute to a good reputation.

According to a representative of a large national charitable foundation, **strategic planning** entails the ability to “keep track of the developments in the country, keep an eye on the economic and political situation.”

“You have to be able to get ready for crises, have the skills of strategic planning,” adds her colleague, a representative of a large charity from Central Ukraine. Such planning enables creation of a financial cushion for another crisis.

“Those who have a stable budget and money in the accounts. Those who can keep paying the salaries to their employees,” a representative of a small charitable organization from Kyiv describes her successful colleagues. “Those who have a crisis fund. Those who have a risk matrix,” adds her colleague from Eastern Ukraine.

**Transparency** is first and foremost about open reporting and accountability. “It is critical to report information about the condition of an organization, what services it provides. It is important to provide enough information, because our society is full of mistrust,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine. No less important in this context is communication with donors and their feedback. A transparent portfolio means a lot at the very beginning of interaction with donors and international organizations.

**Commitment to ideas.** According to the respondents, charity is impossible without emotional engagement. “Commitment to ideas is important. People should pursue an idea,” says a representative of a small Western Ukraine-based charitable foundation. “People in charity do not work for money only. They should live by these values, the mission of their foundation,” a colleague from the foundation, located in one of Eastern oblasts of Ukraine supports her.

**Working with socially significant problems** is yet another component of a charity's recipe for success. Support for the Ukrainian army during the war, countering the COVID-19 pandemic – these problems resonate in the society, and attention to them makes it easier to receive funding.

**Active communication** through social networks and the media increases the chances of charities to receive public support. However, this component of effectiveness is mentioned only by representatives of large charitable foundations that participated in the survey.

**Having an extensive network of volunteers** helps save resources and at the same time do a lot of work.

**Adherence to these universal principles can make a charitable organization resilient to vulnerabilities, resistant to the crises that regularly occur in our state.**

For organizations that do not specialize in medical issues and have some difficulty in pursuing their mission, here are several tactical tips informed by the current developments:

- It can be effective to merge the problems your charity is focusing on with overcoming the effects of the pandemic. It is important to show that the consequences of the spread of COVID-19 are broader than the disease itself.

## Charity in times of coronavirus

- More actively involve volunteers. Offer cooperation of experience and manpower. In this case, the opportunities will increase and the resource will be spent more efficiently.
- Cooperation with colleagues is also important. Those organizations that significantly intensified their activities will not refuse an offer of a helping hand, and those who have decreased their work will be able to join the projects.
- If you suspend your activities for any reason, it makes sense to rethink your organization's financial and organizational model. It is a matter of diversification of funding, optimization of processes, search of new creative decisions. At this time, you can increase your organization's online and media presence.
- Intensification of work with the media can bring success. Active coverage of the problems that your organization works with and your beneficiaries can draw attention of the general public to these problems and mobilize the community to provide support.

- It is already clear that the charity cannot avoid digitalization, so it is important to develop relevant skills in staff. It may even make sense to launch new types of assistance for beneficiaries, such as access to digital technology in rural areas and digital education for the elderly.
- After the crisis, it is important to keep in mind the need to improve institutional culture in the charity sector. So, it makes sense to join professional associations, to enhance cooperation.
- After all, it is important to remain optimistic, not be afraid of challenges, learn, change. Because nobody but us!

# Requests for information of the charity sector

The modern information era prompts us to get used to the idea of lifelong learning. The charity sector is no exception.

**Representatives of most of the surveyed charities say that they are interested in gaining additional knowledge for improved performance.** However, the amount and content of necessary knowledge depends on the size of the charity.

## Relevant education topics of the charity:

### ● Small charities :

- lead-up of grant programs;
- engagement of sponsors;
- SMM;
- media activity.

### ● Medium charities :

- legislative updates;
- PR;



- psychology, social work;
- HR, team leadership;
- accounting;
- CRM systems;
- project management;
- fundraising;
- searching of volunteers and professionals of the charity sector;
- skills to overcome emotional burnout of volunteers;
- strategic planning in the charity sector.

### — ● **Large charities :**

- work with new financial software;
- full-cycle online planning software;
- CRM-programs to systematize the organizational management;
- skills of monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting;
- HR;
- PR.

For example, every fourth representative of small charitable organizations (with an annual turnover of up to UAH 1 million) believes that they do not need specialized training at this stage. “There may be certain issues, like communication with people, administrative processes, but it is better to gain experience,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine. “We don’t run a large-scale activity. We are still good with ‘nobody but us’ principle,” a colleague from Kyiv supports him.

However, other colleagues think different. The most relevant topics for this category of charitable organizations are motivation for charity, writing grant applications, engaging sponsors, SMM, media activity. “We would be interested in something about grant writing, about how you can get significant help from sources other than the government. We need to know how to properly prepare a budget, how to involve more people in charity, how to motivate people to work together. We would like to involve more entrepreneurs, churches, schools,” says a representative of a charitable foundation.

Instead, medium-sized charities (with an annual turnover of UAH 1 to 10 million per year) feel constant need for training and a lack of diverse knowledge.

It concerns both general knowledge (for example, foreign languages) and professional knowledge, including legislative updates, public relations, teambuilding, psychology, social work, accounting, HR, management, SMM, CRM systems, project management, fundraising, raising money from business, writing grant applications, training on integration with the state budget, searching of volunteers and professionals of the charity sector, skills to overcome emotional burnout of volunteers, strategic planning in the charity sector.

“We need to know how to look for resources, including human resources, how to find a competent person. How to work with emotional burnout caused by hard work,” a representative of a charitable organization from Kyiv lists the necessary skills. “We are interested in trainings such as the *Light of Hope (Svitlo Nadii)*, Poltava-based NGO) offers – how to integrate with the state budget, team building and relaxation, how to conduct family trainings so that our husbands and children get fit. But such trainings are very expensive for us,” complains a representative of a charity from Eastern Ukraine. “Strategic planning. Fundraising. Right social project. What are the innovations. How to properly mobilize donors online. How to promote a page, a website,” adds a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation to the list of needs.

Representatives of large charitable organizations do not feel a lack of competencies, probably because they regularly receive trainings and get involved in internal programs of staff development.

“I do not feel this need. I am constantly improving my skills. I’m a mentor myself. We pay a lot of attention to the selection of staff, and they are usually competent,” says a representative of a national charitable foundation. “The world is changing, so we have to change. We have different directions. We are trying to introduce international standards, to be innovative,” adds her colleague from Central Ukraine.

This category of organizations notes the need for knowledge such as how to work with new financial software; full-cycle online planning software, CRM-programs to systematize the organizational management; skills of monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting, HR, public relations. “We are interested in topics such as emotional intelligence, HR – namely, how to properly fire people, and PR – because we do not know how to promote ourselves. It is very difficult,” explains a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine.

# New requests for information caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

With the onset of the crisis, many charities faced new needs for information and skills. They can be divided into three groups:

- working with beneficiaries;
- those directly related to the work of the organization;
- medical information.

The first group of requests concerns skills of **working with vulnerable groups and rendering psychological support**. “I would like to know how to help the population during the crisis. How to work with vulnerable groups, because they suffer difficulties in such periods. Hands-on experience, cases,” says a representative of a charitable organization from Western Ukraine. “Psychological support courses, how to get a relief from anxiety...” adds his colleague from Southern Ukraine. “How to professionally communicate with beneficiaries during an epidemic. In this regard, we consulted with sanitary doctors,” adds a representative of an organization from Eastern Ukraine.

The second group includes skills on **preparing online trainings, creating a store on Facebook or an online store.** “More information about the possibilities of working with online tools. On how to transfer our activities online,” a representative of an Eastern Ukraine-based charitable foundation lists the desired skills.

The third group includes **knowledge on reducing the risk of contracting COVID-19, training in first aid, information about testing.** “Accurate information about COVID-19. How you can get infected and how not. We must disseminate this information in an accessible and plain language. I read complicated entries. I puzzle them out by myself. We need knowledge adapted for wider public,” says a representative of a well-known Western Ukrainian charitable foundation. “We are interested in what protection means are needed. Now a lot of money is spent on the suits that do not provide adequate protection, as well as on masks that do provide adequate protection. Knowledge about COVID-19,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv agrees with her colleague.



## Optimal formats of training

For most charities, the most convenient format is distance learning in the form of online conferences/lectures with a possibility to ask questions and get answers. Upon completion of such training, participants would like to receive summaries of the speeches in the form of presentations in text format. Representatives of medium-sized and large organizations are interested in online trainings. “Zoom conferences and online format such as video tutorials, video appeals, live Q&A conversations are optimal,” says a representative of a small charitable foundation from Central Ukraine. “Online personal attendance with involvement, cases. Interactive real-time trainings online,” says her colleague from Kyiv.



**Only every fifth respondent prefers offline format – study tours and trainings.**

Other formats mentioned occasionally – and only by the representatives of large charities are mailout, reading literature, video interviews with experts, learning from experience. “Webinars, because it can take place online in real time and be recorded (this is for the administrative department), and rehabilitation specialists prioritize contact-based formats so that they can look how the professionals work, learn from experience,” says a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

### **Optimal formats of training:**

**80% of respondents** = prefer online format such as video tutorials, video appeals, live online Q&A sessions;

**20% of respondents** = prefer offline format such as trainings and study trips.

For sure, the content and method of presentation are more important than the format. “It is critical that the training is interesting. Any boring theory is not interesting,” explains a representative of a small foundation from Central Ukraine.





## Training and development

The needs of charities in terms of regularity, content and motivation of training vary depending on their size. For example, among the representatives of small charitable organizations, about a half receives training for professional goals. However, they undergo training extremely sporadically and non-systemically. The training contents often depend on the offer rather than the needs of the trainees.

Those who do not go to trainings explain it by lack of time and effort, as well as by having sufficient competence. “I’m not studying. There is no need. I have been in this field for more than 20 years, so I understand my target audience,” says the head of a charitable organization from Central Ukraine.

Those who receive trainings mention trainings on the following topics: work with children (training provided by local authorities); gender equality (on the platform of a foreign charitable organization); work with local and state budgets: how to control them and prepare inquiries (within the framework of grant projects of *the Institute of Political Education* and *Territory of Success* NGO). Some of the respondents pursue a Master’s degree in Health Care Management.

Instead, representatives of medium-sized charities report that they go to trainings constantly. In fact, training is **part of their corporate culture**. “Our organization constantly trains staff through professional webinars, courses, literature,” says a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine. “We have trainings, workshops and working meetings in every project. Especially in the network projects. We invite specialists. We are often invited by other organizations,” adds her colleague from Southern Ukraine.

**Topics of trainings are relevant and diverse:** project management; international advocacy; human rights protection and prevention of violence; building a modality of institutional development, mission, vision (based on the *Charity Development Center of Ukrainian Catholic University*); work in unstable situations (training from *Zagoriy Foundation*); policies for ensuring security of organizations (beneficiaries, employees); social cohesion and conflict reduction; activity of the organization in regional coordination councils; fundraising. “There are mailouts on the *Gurt* portal (free webinars and lectures, available in Zoom),” says a representative of a charitable organization located in one of Eastern oblasts of Ukraine. “These are courses on Prometheus. Also, specialized organizations offer trainings – *Gurt, Prostir*,” adds her colleague. “The course on fundraising by Olia Kudinenko. She has conferences on Facebook, including international ones. We are interested in this. We see new interesting books – for example, a book on fundraising by Kraplych,” adds a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation.


**Representatives of large charitable organizations receive trainings often, a lot and systematically.**

These trainings take place both within the framework of the organization's policy and on the employees' own initiative. "Our organization constantly trains staff through professional webinars, courses, literature," says a representative of a charitable foundation from Southern Ukraine. Respondents note that they actively receive certificates from online courses (such as Coursera), listen to well-known bloggers (for example, Andriy Fedoriv, Olga Kuzmuk), attend special courses in universities in Ukraine and abroad, share experience with colleagues. The topics of such trainings are extremely broad, as their studies almost never stop.

"From on-the-job training to webinars from the U.S. charities. Both fundraising and pediatric oncology...", a representative of a national charitable foundation gives examples.

"We share experience with colleagues, national and international experts and researchers. We take courses, as well as attend consultations, programs at Zhytomyr and Kyiv universities. How to build the work of the PR department (on the *LABA* platform); digital marketing, strategic communications (through mentoring from abroad); implementation of fundraising strategies (at the *Fundraising School of Indianapolis Institute of Philanthropy*)," says a representative of a foundation from Central Ukraine.

“Some of the latest examples are a course on management of charities from *Ukrainian Catholic University*, *Lviv Business School*, mentorship from abroad based on personal contacts,” her colleague from Western Ukraine describes her experience of training.



**To sum up, the larger is the organization and the higher is the level of its organizational culture, the more systematically and deeply its staff receive trainings. Although, there is probably an inverse relationship: the more trained is the staff of the charity, the more powerful it becomes.**



## Sources of information

**It is emblematic that the size of a charitable organization correlates not only with how its staff receive training, but also with the sources where the employees look for information necessary for their activities.**

Small charities do not practice systemic collection of information for their operation. One third of their representatives reported that they did not need to gather information. Another third of respondents accumulate information in the process of their work – receive it from beneficiaries, project participants, colleagues, contractors and through word of mouth.

**One third of organizations search information on the Internet** (through Google), on the pages of sister charities and on Facebook. The websites of *Gurt* and *Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum* were also mentioned. “Some interesting manuals are available on the website of *Ukrainian Forum of Philanthropists*. I am still browsing the websites of large international charities (they have a lot of interesting research), accounting and legal websites,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv explains her preferences.

Popular sources of information for representatives of large and medium-sized charitable organizations are resources such as *Gurt*, *Public Space (Hromadskyi Prostir)*, the website of the *Ukrainian Forum of Philanthropists*.

Network organizations get new information from parent organizations. “We are members of the international movement EMAUS. I go to meetings with representatives of this movement from different countries. We participate in EMAUS workshops and learn how other organizations help the homeless people in other countries,” says a representative of a Western Ukraine-based charitable foundation.


The respondents also actively mentioned the sources of information such as the **websites of government agencies** (the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, decentralization departments) and international organizations (for example, WHO).

**Cluster mailout** is popular among the surveyed representatives of the charity sector.

Facebook feeds, industry Facebook communities, contacts with other charities and media reports are less popular sources of information. “Groups on Facebook (industry communities) of *Ukrainian Philanthropic Marketplace* – charitable aid operators, Ukrainian Forum of Philanthropists. News websites (ukr.net, Ukrainian Pravda). Websites of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers.

Newsletters from *Ukrainian Philanthropic Marketplace* and *Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum*. Digest Ukraine Telegram channel,” a representative of a Kyiv-based charitable foundation lists the sources. “We study the work of other charitable organizations, *Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum*, Tabletochki website,” adds her colleague.

At the same time, large charitable organizations more often than medium-sized mention the stakeholder network as a source of information. “The news come from the Facebook feed, Telegram channel of the Ministry of Health, official websites of the Ministry of Health and the Cabinet of Ministers. Also, we have communication with doctors and beneficiaries,” explains a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv. “When it's a training, we have American resources. When it comes to sources of information about Ukrainian context, these are news from Gurt and Ukrainian Forum of Philanthropists (newsletter), as well as local news to understand what is happening in the city. Of course, communication with partners and sponsors, stakeholders, grant-makers,” continues a colleague from Central Ukraine.



**To sum up, it is obvious that the larger is the organization, the more diversified are the sources where its staff takes information.**



## Brand promotion

Smaller charities promote their activities primarily by reporting them in communities on social networks. Only in a half of cases they cooperate with the media. “We write that we are starting an action, and people are joining. Honesty and transparency are key. Traditional media work effectively for coverage, and social media, for fundraising,” the head of a charity from Central Ukraine shares his experience.


At the same time, smaller organizations maintain active contacts directly with communities. “We attract attention by the work we do. We invite entrepreneurs, school principals, people we help to the meetings, where we show videos about our accomplishments,” says a representative of a small charitable foundation. “Posters, postcards, work with schools. We mostly work through volunteers, live conversations,” a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv describes the ways to promote their activities.

Medium-sized organizations are actively represented in social networks – on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as well as have their own websites.



They actively publish materials in the media. “We create news opportunities in the media, get referrals from the network of stakeholders and use marketing buzz,” a representative of an Eastern Ukraine-based charity lists the communication channels.

However, they consider that the work in social networks, active interaction and creative solutions are the most efficient modality. “We have a website, media, social networks, an organization’s hotline. The most effective is the page on Facebook – there we have the greatest coverage of people,” explains a representative of a charitable foundation from Eastern Ukraine.



**“Social networks are the best way. And 17 years of our hard work are our asset. We always get the job done. We did a lot for the first time in Ukraine: garage sales, a community to live in, we started collecting clothes and restoring it. We were the first to open a charity shop, to prove that you don’t have to be rich to help the poor,”**

continues her colleague from Western Ukraine.

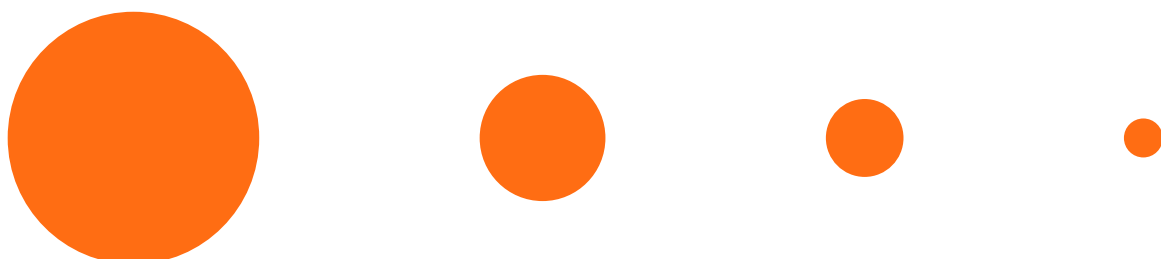
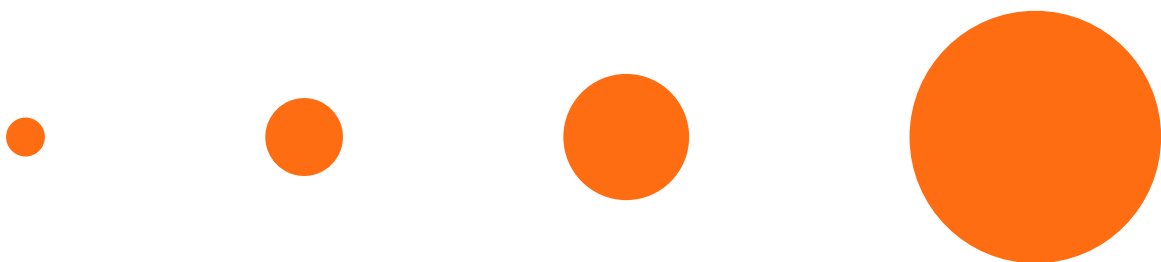
Charity professionals from Southern Ukraine agree, “We have pages on Facebook and Instagram. But promotions, flash mobs, marathons work better.” Kyiv-based colleagues continue, “We have a page on Facebook, Instagram, a website. We are represented in the media. We start challenges. So far, only personal communication works.”

Larger charities use similar brand promotion policies, but their policies are even more diverse and creative. They combine traditional tools – a website, social media, speeches in the media, public events – with larger and more complex programs.

“For us, it is important to focus on our groups. We go to them through the community, through social workers. We reach out to the public through the media and some brands (such as a jewelry brand). In addition, we are implementing communication programs related to medical reforms (on family medicine and on COVID),” says a representative of a national charity. “We are conducting interactive events – volunteer camps for the reconstruction of cities in the East, opening of youth platforms. They come to us for internships,” shares a representative of a charitable foundation from Western Ukraine.

**Interesting and creative techniques** are indispensable for drawing attention to the organization's activities. For example, a representative of a well-known charitable foundation reveals his secrets: "We do integration with Ukrainian bloggers, into their videos on YouTube, open letters."

The respondents consider media speeches to be the most effective communication channel. "Reputation and the media work best," says a representative of a charitable foundation from Kyiv. "Facebook works best for Kyiv audience, and television and regional media work best for the regions," her colleague shares her observations.



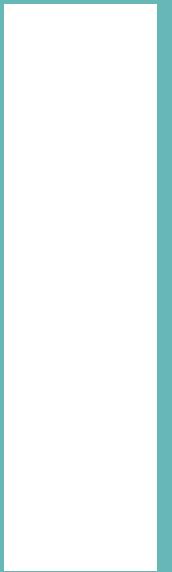
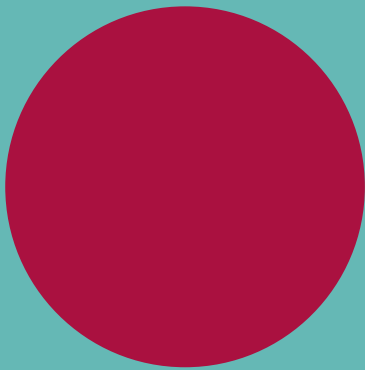
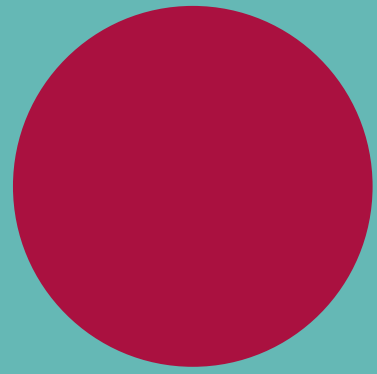
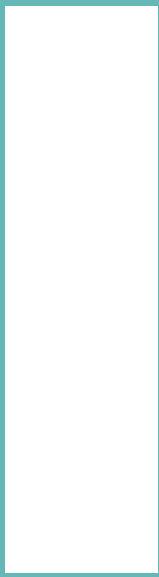
## Conclusions and recommendations

- There is a significant difference in the culture of learning and information accumulation between smaller and larger charities. A possible reason is that most representatives of organizations with a turnover of up to UAH 1 million combine activities in the charity sector with their main job (for example, in government or business). Therefore, they lack time to systematize organizational and personal development. They often choose the path of least effort and use routine algorithms to organize their work. Therefore, they have the illusion of being fully competent in what they do.

**However, the price of such an illusion is high vulnerability to crises. So, it is important to explain them that it is not only the diversification of financial revenues but also the diversification of knowledge that secures the organizations from fragility and help make nontrivial decisions in unstable times.**

- Another reason for lower engagement of small charities in training is the lack of funds for staff development. In fact, training programs are often too expensive, so even those who are open to knowledge join the trainings not because they are relevant, quality or necessary to them, but because the organizers invite them and cover the costs. As a result, the acquired knowledge is often chaotic and irrelevant to the work of their organization. Probably, a kind of website-roadmap on topics relevant to them would be helpful for such organizations. After all, the menu usually not only sheds light on the range of dishes, but also often provokes appetite. Updates on where interesting information is available for free is also a good practice.
- Large and medium-sized charitable organizations are quite actively involved in trainings. However, they are also interested in affordable and relevant training, adapted to Ukrainian context. Their representatives are most interested in the topics such as process management in the organization, PR, HR, SMM, CRM.
- For sure, there is a high demand for training in the context of recent developments, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Most organizations had to chaotically seek adapted knowledge about the new virus, ways to avoid infection, testing, combating its consequences (for example, panic).

- Up-to-date and reliable information disseminated among organizations at the beginning of the pandemic would be extremely relevant.
- The pandemic also identified the need to strengthen staff skills in online communication, document flow, SMM, and video production software. These skills will be relevant after the pandemic is over.
  - For most organizations, the best way to gain new knowledge is online conferences and real-time online training with a possibility to ask questions.
  - According to the respondents, the most popular and effective sources of information are the resources of *Gurt*, *Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum*, *Public Space*, as well as industry groups on Facebook and mailout. At the same time, the practice of using these resources should be promoted among smaller charities in the regions, as they evidently lack knowledge about where to get relevant and up-to-date information.
  - Finally, ways to draw attention to the activities of an organization should be as diversified as possible. Today, the charities should at least have a page on social networks, and the best-case scenario is cooperation with the media and active interaction with stakeholders and the community.



Charity  
**in times of  
coronavirus**