HANDBOOK

SURVIVOR AND COMMUNITY-LED CRISIS RESPONSE: UKRAINIAN IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE

Authors:
Iryna Solovei, Maryna Varban, Josef Yanishyn,
Lyudmila Sopruzhynska, Olga Zozulynska,
Ksenia Omelianenko, Viktoria Martirosova

CONTENT

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NGO	Non-governmental organization
CF	Charitable Foundation
PO	Public organization
IE	Individual entrepreneur
USR	Unified State Register
IG	Initiative group
CSO	Civil society organization
TC	Territorial Community
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
PLHIV	People living with HIV
PWID	People who inject drugs
SW	Sex workers
MSM	Men who have sex with men
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

INTRODUCTION

During the war, when there was an urgent need to retrain and provide more comprehensive and rapid assistance to people, the ICF "Alliance for Public Health", with the financial support of the Church of Sweden and the technical assistance of the Christian Aid charity organization (Great Britain), introduced in Ukraine the approach "Supporting Community Initiatives" (SCLR - Survivor and community-led crisis response). This approach involves the active involvement of initiative groups of affected communities in solving the main problems and meeting the urgent needs caused by the war. The mechanism for implementing the approach in Ukraine is to provide initiative groups with mini-grants worth up to USD 5,000 to implement mini-projects of assistance to local communities.

The Survivor and community-led crisis response (SCLR) approach focuses on the natural activity, creativity, and capabilities of communities affected by any crisis to encourage and support them in identifying and implementing initiatives that improve their immediate well-being, help eliminate the root causes of the crisis promptly, strengthen long-term sustainability, accelerating social cohesion and responsibility.

The main priorities of the "Supporting Community Initiatives" approach for Ukraine:

- communities are the first and last to respond to a crisis;
- all communities have rich knowledge and skills to respond to crisis and long-term vulnerability;
- field response can be much faster and more cost-effective than conventional aid or humanitarian efforts;
- crisis response is strengthened when women and other marginalized groups are also given the chance to take responsibility and lead;
- social connection and cohesion enhance crisis response and community resilience.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APPROACH IN UKRAINE

ICF "Alliance for Public Health" is a pioneer in Ukraine in successfully implementing the SCLR approach. From May 2022 to December 2023, the Alliance, within the framework of various humanitarian projects, together with its partners - regional NGOs, supported 695 public initiatives in 22 regions of the country, providing mini-grants for a total of more than 2 million pounds. As a result of the implementation of mini-projects, these public initiatives reached more than 436,000 affected people with various assistance.

A recent real-time assessment by the international faith-based organization ACT Alliance* found this approach to be a best practice to support and strengthen plans to localize humanitarian aid in Ukraine.

The study is available via the link: https://actalliance.org/ (p.35)

WHO IS THE GUIDE INTENDED FOR?

The guide is designed for 2 types of users:

- NGOs that want to issue mini-grants;
- NGOs that wish to receive mini-grants.

Individual sections of this guide may interest initiative groups or beneficiaries who want to receive mini-grants to meet community needs or solve their problems.
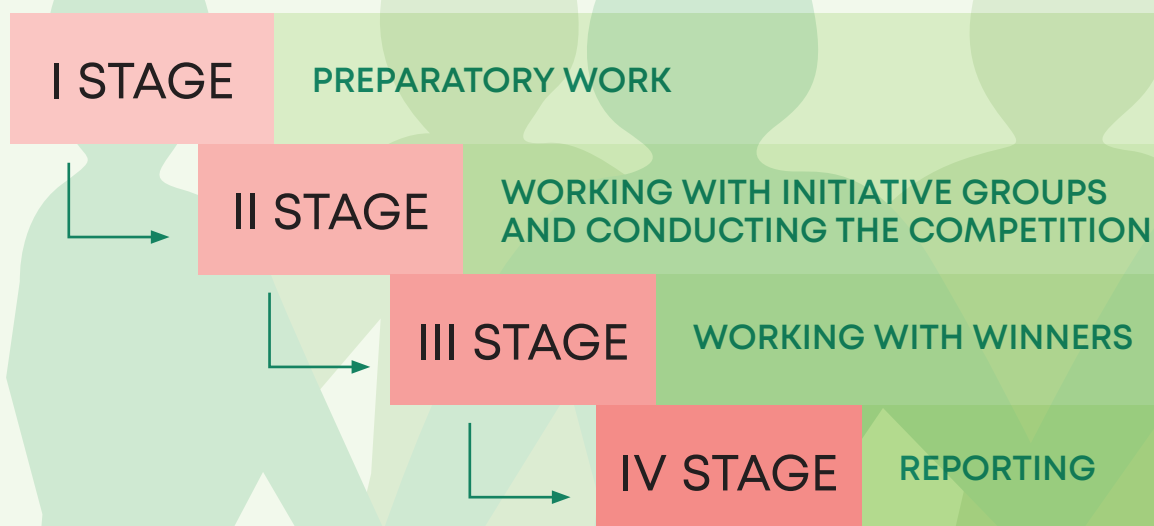
PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The primary purpose of this guide is to acquaint representatives of non-governmental organizations who want to provide mini-grants with the SCLR approach, the main stages of its implementation in Ukraine, and the results.

THE GUIDE CONTAINS

The guide contains a description of the SCLR approach, a step-by-step algorithm and the main stages of its implementation, a description of successful practices, difficulties that arose during implementation, and a list of the primary regulatory documents.

LIST OF THE MAIN STAGES OF APPROACH IMPLEMENTATION

I STAGE — PREPARATORY WORK

II STAGE — WORKING WITH INITIATIVE GROUPS AND CONDUCTING THE COMPETITION

III STAGE — WORKING WITH WINNERS

IV STAGE — REPORTING

I STAGE: PREPARATORY WORK

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPROACH

Let's fantasize... You received funding to implement the SCLR approach; how do you implement it?

The main objective of the SCLR approach is to support community initiatives to improve their well-being in the context of war and to develop their capacity to help the community and those in need further.

Basic principles of the approach

1 Strengthening the active actions of local communities/initiative groups to establish a better life in war conditions.
2 Consider and use the strengths and opportunities of local communities/initiative groups.
3 Supporting the implementation of various initiatives of local communities (they will generate many potential local solutions).
4 Transfer of powers and responsibilities from NGOs to local communities/initiative groups.
5 Strengthening social cohesion through supporting collective actions, active connections and networks, and involvement of women and youth as leaders.
6 Support the dignity and psychosocial well-being of community representatives and initiative groups.
7 Implement innovations, learning by trial and error.
8 Use existing reporting ways but be flexible to avoid complicating the project.
9 Support and development of communities/initiative groups so that they highlight local problems at the regional or national level and solve them.
10 Complements, not replaces, regular care in meeting needs: SCLR aims to meet only some of the needs of all people.
11 Fast, flexible, convenient actions without bureaucracy.

Public initiatives are supported by mini-grants, which should complement other humanitarian responses carried out, for example, by government bodies or other charitable or volunteer organizations. Representatives of communities themselves carry out mini-projects without external intervention of any structures or organizations. All responsibility for using funds and the mini-project results lies with the representatives of the initiative groups of these affected communities.

A mini-grant, in the form of targeted charitable assistance for a quick response to the urgent needs of communities, can be received by both registered charitable organizations and public associations, as well as unregistered initiative groups of citizens/representatives of target groups and public initiatives formed in the regions of Ukraine, including in territories freed from occupation, or in places where a significant number of internally displaced persons are located.

If the initiative group does not have its registered legal entity, it can apply in partnership with another registered organization. Such an organization must be entered in the Register of Non-profit Institutions and Organizations. In this case, it is the initiative group that prepares and submits an application for targeted charitable assistance, and in the case of receiving funding, implements and reports following the approved application. The registered organization acts as a partner representative of the initiative group of the community, receives funds on its balance sheet, and helps the initiative group with project implementation and reporting.

Community initiative groups may include people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Example:

Target groups of communities:

- internally displaced persons (IDPs);
- people who found themselves in difficult life circumstances as a result of the war;
- persons who suffered as a result of the destruction of the Kakhovska HPP;
- representatives of HIV-vulnerable groups (PLHIV, PWID, SW, MSM, LGBT);
- women with children;
- large families;
- people with disabilities and others.

IMPORTANT!

If you are an organization that wants to implement the SCLR approach, i.e. open competitions and mini-grants, you should:

- be a registered non-governmental organization that can accept funding;
- be able to provide mini-grants in accordance with its charter and procedures;
- have experience in providing funding to other beneficiaries (NGOs or IEs);
- have information about restrictions in Ukraine on providing funds to unregistered business entities or individuals;
- monitor changes in the legislation of Ukraine and trends in the field of providing grant funds to individuals and legal entities.

ACTIVITY PLANNING

Before starting work, you should clearly understand how you will build your workflow. Answer the following questions for yourself:

- Do you plan to announce open contests and award mini-grants to contest winners regularly, for example, every 3-6 months?
- Do you plan to announce a one-time open competition and accept participants' applications regularly?

Having chosen the type of activity that is optimal for you, you can better organize your work.

Team

The quantitative composition of the project staff depends on the scope of activities and the project's needs. It is necessary to involve the following full-time employees of the NGO in the form of an employment contract with the project team:

- project coordinator;
- program and financial specialists who will be involved in supporting mini-grants;
- project accountant.

According to the form of the civil law contract (CLC), incl. with IE:

- regional facilitators of community initiative groups (at the organization's choice). Their number will depend on the number of regions in which mini-projects will be implemented using mini-grants. *Read about the role of regional facilitators on page 12.*

Competition Commission

To ensure the openness and transparency of selecting winners of the mini-grant competition, your organization must assemble a competition commission. An essential condition is the involvement of not only members of your NGO but also independent experts in the competition commission. They can represent partner non-governmental organizations, including volunteers and local authorities. It is desirable to include beneficiaries in the tender commission. *More details about the work of the tender commission are in section 2.*

Monitoring

Monitoring is critical for the assistance provided under the project to reach the people who need it.

Project monitoring is the regular tracking of key components of the project at all stages of its implementation. It analyzes the resource contribution to the project, the main activities necessary to achieve the goals and objectives, and the project results. Monitoring is carried out by the grant provider (NGO) and the initiative groups, which received a mini-grant and are implementing a certain mini-project with these funds.

Routine monitoring of the project, which the grant-giving NGO carries out, includes:

- a thorough analysis of the execution of the project work plan;
- tracking the leading indicators, trends, and difficulties in project implementation and finding ways to eliminate them;
- determination of the dynamics of coverage of clients and beneficiaries by mini-projects;
- analysis of financial costs and procurement procedures;
- tracking specific results of the implementation of mini-projects, etc.

Monitoring mechanisms can be:

- regular communication with executors of mini-projects;
- verification of reporting documentation (both programmatic and financial);
- analysis of social networks, websites of executors of mini-projects or communities;

- trips "to the places" of the implementation of mini-projects where the security situation does not prevent this;
- online, video meetings at the places of implementation of mini-projects;
- communication (including remote and online) with clients, mini-project beneficiaries, stakeholders, etc.

IMPORTANT!

We recommend that organizations have active pages in social networks - this is a bright and accessible mechanism to be open and report on the activities.

If you have relevant experience in monitoring this kind of sub-granting and are also an experienced organization, you will easily cope. Remember that with proper reporting experience, showing the results to the donor or beneficiaries will make ensuring an open business process easier.

IMPORTANT!

Nothing is impossible! If you don't currently have relevant experience, but want to try to get funding for the implementation of the SCLR approach, you can take a small budget for a mini-grant, try, learn from your mistakes, and later improve your work by implementing new projects using this approach.

TYPES OF MINI-GRANTS

Before your NGO prepares an application for project financing through a mini-grant, the first thing you should do is write for yourself:

- how much it will cost to implement one mini-project;
- what is the duration of one mini-grant (implementation period);
- what the mini-grants that you want to finance can be used for (topics);
- what will be the mechanism for providing mini-grants;
- whether it will be possible to finance out-of-competition applications.

Briefly, the entire process of providing a mini-grant looks like this:

The process of providing mini-grants to initiative groups begins with local or national non-governmental organizations announcing an open competition for receiving mini-grants. Existing and/or newly created groups that implement or want to implement initiatives aimed at providing mutual assistance to those affected by a crisis are invited to participate in the competition. These ideas are submitted in the form of short applications, which are reviewed and approved by the local representative tender committee, which includes members of local or national NGOs and representatives of local authorities, experts, beneficiaries, etc. If the proposal is approved, the initiative groups receive mini-grants of up to 5,000 US dollars to implement a particular project within 2-3 months. At the end of the project implementation, the initiative group submits simple reports

(programmatic and financial with confirmation of expenses). Based on these reports, the NGO supporting the initiative group reflects and documents their experience gained during the implementation of the project and reports to the donors.

Since the cost and duration of the mini-grant can be different, each grant-giving organization must determine for itself what precisely the mini-grants should be aimed at, whether they will be urgent (i.e., 1.5-3 months) or long-term (4-6 months or more) and their average cost.

MINI-GRANTS	
Urgent Amount: Up to 5 000 $ Implementation period: 1.5 - 3 months	**Long-term** Amount: Up to 20 000 $ Implementation period: 4-6 months and more

Financing of all mini-grants occurs only in the national currency (UAH).

To determine precisely what the mini-grants will be aimed at and which applications will be allowed to participate in the competition, one can independently outline the specific topics of such mini-projects (for example, preparing for winter, improving living conditions in shelters, etc.) or not limit oneself to the issues of the initiative communities.

An approximate list of possible types of activities that can be financed:

- organizing or restoring access to essential resources;
- assistance in overcoming the consequences of the disaster (for example, Kakhovska HPP);
- provision of humanitarian needs of the affected population;
- provision of psychological, medical, and social assistance;
- provision of services related to education, training, and consulting on various security issues, including, for example, tactical medicine, mine safety, etc.;
- well drilling, digging/cleaning of wells, repair of water towers, etc.;
- repair of the store, paramedic and midwifery point, dormitory, bridge, etc.;
- restoration of satisfactory conditions for people's living (except capital repairs of apartments);
- reintegration and rehabilitation measures for IDPs;
- other types of activities according to the needs of communities.

Given the acute nature and presence of various problems related to the war in Ukraine, the first rounds of open mini-grant competitions held by the Alliance in 2022 focused on providing urgent and concrete assistance to affected communities, namely: repair and equipment of shelters, medical centers, creation of invincibility centers, restoration of water and electricity supply, purchase of generators, repair of vehicles, orphanages and schools for children with special educational needs, provision of medical and psychological support, providing students with educational materials, etc.

At the same time, there was also a wide range of initiatives from public groups aimed at meeting various needs, namely:

- equipment of a laundry room, which became a meeting place that united more than 1,400 IDPs and residents, as well as providing an opportunity to communicate and establish connections (with the support of CF "Our Future" in Zaporizhia);

- opening of an art therapy space for children and distribution of food and hygiene kits that contribute to social rehabilitation (with the support of the "Independence" Public Health Center, Vinnytsia);
- equipment of a room for the provision of speech therapy services for IDP children with autism, which ensure psychosocial recovery and adaptation after trauma/stress from the war (with the support of the ICF "Alliance for Public Health", Lviv), etc.

Therefore, based on the analysis of the situation in the region and information from beneficiaries and initiative groups, you can decide whether you will work only with short-term or long-term mini-grants or whether you will use both types of grants.

We recommend providing for the possibility of working with out-of-competition applications.

During significant crises, unforeseen circumstances can occur, for example, as was the case with the environmental disaster caused by the collapse of the Kakhovska HPP. In this situation, NGOs that provided mini-grants found an opportunity to finance the implementation of mini-grants outside the competition. Suppose something happens, and it is essential for people in the region or communities who need immediate help. In that case, we recommend that you have a separate budget line (out-of-competition funds) that you can direct to solving these urgent needs.

IMPORTANT!

The SCLR approach involves training of initiative groups, assistance in writing grant applications, working on their mistakes, constant communication in order to accumulate new knowledge and skills.

That is why you should prepare well in the preparatory phase and plan working meetings, training, consultations, and mentoring for these IGs. Following current legislation, you also need to develop the mechanisms for conducting procurement procedures, selecting service providers, etc. - those procedures that will accompany the entire mini-granting process and coordinate them with your subgrantees.

To better organize your work, you need to decide whether your organization will undertake all the mentoring, training, and support of all initiative groups or whether you will involve regional facilitators in cooperation.

IMPORTANT!

The classic version of SCLR assumes that the project team includes regional facilitators who participate in the search and/or creation of initiative groups, together with them analyze needs/problems and determine priorities, form ideas for mini-grants, and help the IG in writing competitive applications, and after receiving financing - support them at all stages of the implementation of mini-projects - from procurement to reporting.

At first, the Alliance independently worked with initiative groups, but later, within the framework of the Swedish project, the classical option was used with the involvement of facilitators.

FACILITATOR

If you chose the classic SCLR option, you need to attract a regional facilitator to the team who will take on the main scope of work with initiative groups in a particular region. The number of facilitators in your team will depend on the number of areas where mini-grants will be awarded.

The facilitator of community initiative groups will deal with:

- searching for local initiative groups that want/are ready to implement mini-projects to help their communities;
- if there are no such IGs in communities, then help in forming an initiative group of communities ("from scratch");
- together with the IG, studying the immediate humanitarian needs and problems of the communities;
- assessment of compliance of the community's request with the stated goals of the project;
- supporting and advising community initiative groups (including those created with the help of a facilitator) that intend to participate in an open tender for a mini-grant;
- assistance to initiative groups (communities) in writing applications, budgets, and other documents submitted to the competition;
- presentation of the applications of community initiative groups during the work of the tender commission and answers to the questions of the commission members regarding the content of the applications;
- routine support and control of initiative groups in further processes, grant implementation, selection of service providers, etc.;
- assistance in establishing cooperation and coordination of the IG with existing domestic and/or international aid centers, including support centers for internally displaced persons, local self-government bodies, territorial communities, volunteer initiatives, etc.;
- familiarization of initiative groups with mini-granting algorithms and procedures;
- support in the preparation of reporting documents and photos for reporting;
- conducting working meetings with initiative groups (preparation and formation of applications, implementation, feedback on the fact of the implementation of the initiative);
- collection of "best practices" and experience working with community initiative groups.

APPROXIMATE LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

According to the terms of reference, each initiative group and/or their partner NGO must submit a package of documents - a complete project application.

Tender documentation

- Completed application form (the form is attached to the competition announcement).
- Completed application budget form (the form is attached to the competition announcement).
- Copies of the extract from the USR.

- Copies of an extract from the register of non-profit institutions and organizations.
- A copy of the organization's charter (if necessary).
- Any other documents that may be useful in deciding (for example, photos, video materials, links to social networks, etc.).

IMPORTANT!

To make a decision, the Competition Commission may determine other documents necessary to substantiate the application and request them from the initiative group of the community at any stage of the competition.

STAGE II: WORKING WITH INITIATIVE GROUPS AND CONDUCTING THE COMPETITION

INITIATIVE GROUPS

At this stage, the work with initiating groups begins.

An initiative group is a group of representatives of a particular community formed to solve a specific problem and implement the initiative/project. The initiative group's warehouse can include from 3 to 10 individuals. This group will be engaged in preparing and submitting applications for the withdrawal of targeted charitable assistance, and in the case of withdrawal of funding - the implementation and communication until the application is approved.

IMPORTANT!

Initiative groups can be either officially registered organizations (for example, an NGO, a public organization, a volunteer movement, a charitable foundation, a religious organization, etc.) or unregistered groups that have come together to resolve problems in the territories liberated from occupation or in places of re-occupation, a significant amount of internal displacement of individuals.

At this stage, initiative groups may still need to be formed - but they are potential groups who want to improve their strength and are ready to participate in the competition.

To find and attract initiative groups to work, you need to develop the text of the announcement, which needs to contain the conditions of the competition, the deadlines for submitting competitive applications, if necessary, an indication of the topic of the competition (it can be preparation for winter-season, setting up security points, providing humanitarian aid, etc.), specify the amount of targeted charitable assistance, criteria for selecting winners, requirements for writing a competitive application.

After that, the competition is announced.

To attract a more significant number of initiative groups, the announcement of the competition is distributed through all possible information channels:

- social networks, websites of organizations;
- among "young" NGOs;
- among the heads, secretaries of territorial communities, and public associations;
- volunteer initiatives;
- available domestic and/or international assistance centers;
- internal groups, chat rooms of IDPs and local communities;
- mailing to friendly organizations;
- announcements in shelters and places of concentration of IDPs;
- regional centers created by representatives of vulnerable communities, etc.

The competition announcement must outline a clear deadline for submitting tender applications, a schedule for their review, decision-making on funding, the announcement of competition winners, signing agreements with them, recalculating funds for implementing the mini-project, etc.

In parallel, work with initiative groups begins. Facilitators or team members (if you do not involve regional facilitators) can organize a meeting for interested parties who intend to participate in the competition, at which they will talk about the purpose and objectives of the competition and explain how the process of selecting applications, determining the winners and further work will take place. Also, information must be provided when it is possible to receive personal consultations from the facilitator or specialists of the grant-giving organization.

While preparing the application, IG representatives will have questions, so you must develop a consultation schedule. These can be phone conversations with specialists/facilitators, thematic online meetings, webinars, chatbots, videos with recorded answers to typical questions, etc. To familiarize IGs with the features of the competition and how to write the applications, you can publish announcements of online meetings, consultations, webinars, or links to videos and/or chatbots on social networks or your organization's website.

IMPORTANT!

Working with every initiative group that wants and is ready to help their community is imperative. Based on the work results with all initiative groups, facilitators/members of the project team can choose several IGs who wish to participate in the competition. These IGs must be carefully accompanied and helped at all stages - from participation in the competition to implementing their idea (mini-project).

COMPETITIVE APPLICATION

Targeted financial assistance will be provided to initiative groups of communities to solve their urgent problems through an open competition conducted by NGOs.

In order to receive funds to solve their problem, a community initiative group must fill out a competitive application for an open competition according to the conditions.

Usually, the competitive application consists of:

- a descriptive part filled in in detail;
- completed budget/estimate form;
- copies of the extract from the USR;
- copies of an extract from the register of non-profit institutions and organizations;
- copies of the organization's charter (if necessary);
- any other documents that may be useful in making a decision (for example, photos, video materials, links to social networks, etc.).

All information in the application must be current, reliable, and detailed.

In the descriptive part of the application, it is necessary to briefly but meaningfully describe:

- the essence of the problem, for the solution of which the initiative group needs financial assistance;

- target groups, beneficiaries who will receive specific assistance or whose problem will be solved;
- specific actions that will help to solve this problem;
- result, impact on the community of this mini-project;
- responsible persons, etc.

In the form of a budget/estimate, it is necessary to calculate and display in detail all costs related to implementing a mini-project, solving a specific problem, etc.

An example of a competitive application of the ICF "Alliance for Public Health"

IMPORTANT!

Unregistered initiative groups apply for the competition together with a partner registered organization. This registered legal entity will act as a partner representative of the initiative group/community to solve a problem or implement a project. Such an organization must be entered in the Register of Non-profit Institutions and Organizations.

If the initiative group does not have a partner NGO, it notes this for the competition commission. If the tender commission decides on financial support for such an initiative group, the NGO-grantor decides on possible ways/mechanisms of such financing.

PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING THE COMPETITION

The selection of initiative groups of communities for the provision of targeted charitable assistance by the Alliance is carried out in several ways:

- open competition announced by the Alliance;
- open competition announced by partner regional NGOs in the regions;
- consideration of non-competitive applications and provision of targeted funding for specific initiatives that require an urgent solution;
- consideration of applications submitted to open tenders announced by regional NGOs and selected by them for financing, but could not be financed by regional NGOs due to insufficient funds in the budget.

After the end of the term specified in the announcement and the collection of all tender applications, the tender commission begins to work.

COMPETITION COMMISSION AND DETERMINATION OF WINNERS

A competition commission is formed to review the received applications and select winners who will receive targeted charitable assistance. The number of members of the tender commission must consist of at least 5 people (an odd number of commission members must be present to make a decision). Including independent external experts, community representatives, and beneficiaries in the commission composition is desirable.

An example of the composition of the competition commission:

- Project manager;
- Domain coordinator or lawyer;

- Accountant/financial specialist;
- Independent expert (representative of a partner NGO, volunteer movement, local government);
- Community representative, the beneficiary.

To avoid a conflict of interest, the competition commission cannot include representatives of initiative groups and interested persons related to the competition participants. That is, if a community submits a tender, then the commission cannot include residents of this community, including representatives of local authorities.

IMPORTANT!

Including people who are representatives of specific communities or beneficiaries in the tender committee is very important.

We also recommend periodically changing the composition of the competition commission - rotating its members.

It is crucial for the competition committee to consider applications and decide on the competition winners quickly (within 1-3 days). Each organization determines how the tender commission will work. It can be an online/offline meeting, or each commission member will work independently.

An example of criteria for evaluating and selecting applications from community initiative groups:

The urgency of the problem. The problem to be solved is urgent and relevant for community representatives and/or residents of villages, towns, cities, etc. The problem corresponds to the topic of the announced competition.

The deadline for solving the problem. The problem described in the application must be solved within 1.5-2 months, and the implementation terms must be realistic and achievable. However, if there is a justified need, the tender commission can decide to increase the implementation period to a maximum of 4 months, provided such a decision is agreed upon within the humanitarian project's validity period.

Social influence. The majority of community representatives and/or residents of villages, towns, cities, etc., should benefit from solving the problem proposed in the application.

The prospect of solving the problem. The application must contain a clear plan for solving the problem with specific deadlines and responsible persons and a realistic and detailed budget corresponding to the implementation plan.

The motivation of the initiative group of the community. The team must be interested in solving the problem and able to implement the proposed idea quickly.

Each criterion will be evaluated by members of the competition commission using a point scale from 0 (minimum) to 5 (maximum). Applications from initiative groups that score the highest number of points for all evaluation criteria will be considered winners and will receive funding.

IMPORTANT!

Each grant-giving NGO must develop objective criteria for evaluating and selecting applications, describe them clearly and in detail, and inform the initiative groups that will submit to the competition. The descriptive application form and other documents must-have items, the description of which will contain information on all objective criteria and facilitate the evaluation of applications by the tender committee.

If several competitive applications are submitted from one community, then the commission chooses the more relevant application.

Documentation of the work of the tender committee:

- an application form from a community initiative group to receive targeted charitable assistance;
- application budget form;
- general register of applications received;
- application evaluation form;
- a protocol for selecting funding applications.

At its own discretion, the tender commission may determine other documents necessary to justify the application and invite them to the initiative group of the community.

The amount of funding and the number of supported applications depends on the organization's budget and may be reduced or increased depending on the recommendations of the tender commission.

IMPORTANT!

Suppose the application of the initiative group was not chosen as the competition's winner. In that case, this initiative group should be allowed to work on the mistakes with the representatives of the grant-giving NGO or the regional facilitator and submit a new application for other competitions that will be held later.

STAGE III: WORKING WITH WINNERS

After the competition commission has determined the winners, the grant-giving organization must communicate the results to all competition participants, both winners and those who will not receive funding under this competition.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

This can be done in several ways: verbally by calling the representative of each IG, posting on the official website or social networks, or sending a letter with the results of the competition to an e-mail address.

We recommend sending letters to the e-mail addresses of all competition participants.

IMPORTANT!

Organizations not receiving funding should be notified that they are invited to participate in subsequent competitions.

Remember! Your goal is also to teach initiative groups how to formulate applications and encourage them to participate in future competitions.

Example of a letter to organizations that did not win

Your application for the open competition for mini-grants "Survivor and community-led crisis response (SCLR) in Ukraine"/"Supporting Community Initiatives" within the project "Integrated Humanitarian Response in Conditions of War and Post-war Reconstruction" with the financial support of the Church of Sweden, under the coordination of the Christian Aid charity organization (Great Britain) and with the technical support of the ICF "Alliance for Public Health" was obtained.

Due to the large number of applications received and limited funding, we inform you that after the selection procedure and the meeting of the competition commission, your application was not supported. We invite you to participate in other contests held by the ICF "Alliance for Public Health", which can be found via the link: *https://aph.org.ua/uk/tendery/programni-konkursy/*

Example of a letter to the winners of the competition

Dear colleagues, the processing of applications submitted for the open competition of mini-grants "Supporting Community Initiatives in Ukraine/Survivor and community-led crisis response (SCLR) in Ukraine" with the financial support of the Church of Sweden and with the technical support and coordination of the charity organization Christian Aid (Great Britain) has been completed.

We are happy to inform you that you have been selected to implement humanitarian projects. We invite you on 03.10 from 14:00 to 18:00 for an introductory meeting with the humanitarian project team.

WORKING MEETING

If necessary, recommendations on finalizing the application and the budget are sent along with the letter for the winners. Also, you need to invite the winning organizations to an introductory working meeting where all project implementation and reporting aspects will be discussed in detail.

Conducting an introductory meeting for the winners is an important and necessary stage of the work. It is required to explain again, in more detail, all the procedures for providing targeted charitable assistance, emphasize the project implementation terms prescribed in the agreements, provide forms and reporting requirements, and discuss all available questions. Also, once again, provide the contacts of the project team and facilitators to start the project implementation.

COORDINATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT

Together with financial and program specialists, the work on finalizing the application and/or budget begins, and the recommendations provided by the tender commission are agreed upon. After that, the NGO that provides the mini-grant starts to prepare an agreement on cooperation and the provision of targeted charitable assistance under the defined financing mechanism.

The financing mechanism depends on the specific application. The practicality of choosing one of the forms of providing targeted assistance is determined in each particular case by the members of the competition commission during the selection of competition winners.

The provided forms of providing targeted charitable assistance:

- Signing a contract with the initiative group, if it is a legally registered public association, charitable organization, or non-profit utility institution.

- Signing a contract with a representative of the initiative group if the association is not legally registered (after consulting with a lawyer about the possibility of assisting an individual and the conditions in a specific case).

- Direct payment for specific services and goods to solve the problem of the initiative group according to the provided invoices, etc. As a rule, the recipient of such goods or services will be a partner organization of the initiative group.

- Other options that are consistent with the principles of the approach and the legislation of Ukraine.

The cooperation agreement contains a package of documents that the NGO provider of mini-grants and sub-grantees signs. This is usually an agreement with appendices and a description of additional procedures if necessary (for example, procurement procedures). **We remind you that the documentation list may differ in each organization!**

Signing a contract and providing targeted charitable assistance

Obligations of NGOs:

- Recognize the contributions of the initiative group of communities in implementing the solution to the stated problem.

- Provide targeted charitable assistance to the community initiative group in the amount of _____ to solve the problem according to the approved application from the community initiative group according to the action plan and budget attached.

- Provide accounting procedures and procurement procedures.

- Provide any advice to the initiative group regarding managing funds or implementing the solution to the problem, as needed.

- Facilitate a discussion with the initiative group of the achievements at the end of the initiative's implementation to evaluate the results and create recommendations for future community initiatives.

- Facilitate connections or introductions to other groups or organizations that can assist the initiative group.

Obligations of the initiative group of communities:

- Carry out all activities and expenses following the attached action plan and budget.

- If necessary, turn to NGOs for help or advice.

- Comply with all basic accounting and procurement procedures.

- Ensure full accountability and transparency of activities and expenditures to the broader community. Create a complaint mechanism.

- Do not make significant changes to implementing the work plan or spending the budget without prior agreement with the NGO.

- Provide final descriptive and financial reports to the broader community and NGOs with supporting primary documents after the implementation of the initiative and no later than _____.

The agreement can be signed physically (with the participation of the signatories) and/or online. To speed up the process of signing the agreement, we recommend using electronic document exchange platforms. In Ukraine, these can be the following electronic document management services:

- Vchasno;
- Paperless;
- Document.Online;
- IIT User KCA-1 and others.

When the agreement is signed, funds are transferred to the current account.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The implementation of the project begins according to the application and the agreed budget.

During project implementation, we recommend:

■ The organization that issues mini-grants to accompany the implementation of the project at all its stages.

This means periodic work meetings, counseling, regular monitoring, and online and telephone availability if there is a facilitator and an opportunity, visits to the places of project implementation for control and monitoring in real-time are needed.

■ Periodically conduct training for facilitators.

With the help of thematic working meetings or trainings, it is necessary to raise the level of awareness of facilitators to acquire new skills and knowledge. At such meetings, experience is exchanged, which helps to organize work better, and problematic aspects are discussed with practical recommendations for overcoming them.

■ Use all possible monitoring mechanisms for you.

We remind you that mini-grants can be urgent (up to 3 months) and long-term (from 4-6 months). Therefore, it is necessary to build the work of software and financial specialists to collect information systematically. For example, if you have an urgent project, monitoring can be carried out once a month; if it is a long-term project, monitoring can occur more often since an extended period requires more control.

Each organization independently decides which monitoring methods to use and conducts inspections following the developed schedule.

IMPORTANT!

The organization providing mini-grants assumes responsibility for the openness and transparency of all procedures by which purchases are made, services are implemented, etc. Remember that you must coordinate procurement procedures with your grantees and work in compliance with these procedures following Ukrainian legislation.

STAGE IV: REPORTING

After the successful implementation of the projects under the terms specified in the agreement, the reporting stage begins. Both recipients of mini-grants and the organization providing grants must strictly adhere to the reporting deadlines.

All reports are prepared per the submitted application, the signed agreement, and the donor's requirements.

To facilitate your work, we provide an approximate list of required reporting documentation following Ukraine legislation, which the Alliance uses during mini-grant implementation.

Approximate list of reporting documents:

- a completed Excel form of a financial report, to which a bank statement and copies of all primary documents confirming the intended use of funds are attached;
- a completed descriptive report form, which contains a detailed description of the problem that was solved with the help of the implementation of the mini-grant, the short-term and long-term results that became possible thanks to this initiative, and the number of people who were helped. Also, the descriptive report includes "Case-studies" - that is, a description of the situation that arose in the community and was solved with the help of a mini-grant and is supported by stories of people who received help and "before" and "after" photos.

IMPORTANT!

At its discretion, each grant-giving organization may add or change the reporting documentation following the donor's requirements.

EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE PLATFORM

If you plan to implement the SCLR approach, we encourage you to join the community of practitioners.

The Community of Practitioners is an association of experts from partner NGOs in Ukraine who implement the "Supporting Community Initiatives" approach and facilitators of regional initiative groups that help solve urgent community problems. They came together to share experiences and best practices, discuss the main issues and obstacles in work, and jointly search for solutions.

Cooperation mechanisms of the community of practitioners:

- regular working meetings to discuss various issues related to the implementation of the approach;
- methodical support (provision of instructions, standard documents, etc.);
- individual consultations;
- mentoring, etc.

You can join the community of practitioners by filling out the form via the link: *http://surl.li/rgkki*

The community of practitioners functions as part of a project funded by the Church of Sweden (CoS) and with the technical support of Christian Aid (Great Britain).

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