

УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НЕЗАЛЕЖНИЙ ЦЕНТР
ПОЛІТИЧНИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ



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UKRAINE CIVIL SOCIETY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT ACTIVITY

**Semi-Annual Project Report
October 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015**

Implemented by Ukrainian Centre for Independent Political Research (UCIPR)

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I. Summary

Overall purpose of the program is to improve the legislative and policy environment to become more conducive to civil society needs and to reflect European standards. It envisaged strengthening of public oversight and engagement in governance, which is only possible through improvement of legislative/policy environment for media and civil society, as well as forming CSO ability to engage citizens and to represent their interests.

UCIPR's unique approach covers the full cycle of improvement of legislative and administrative environment for civil society development in its key areas. Namely, UCIPR combines analysis of shortcomings and opportunities, monitoring of emerging challenges, development of proposals for improvement of legal acts and administrative practices, initiating and leading advocacy campaigns as well as offer awareness campaigns, methodological support and monitoring of adopted legislation for civil society development.

In addition, the program also covers organizational development of UCIPR to make the Center able to sustain its activities and to serve as a leader and driver of civil society legislative efforts.

II. Current Context and Problems

Although the current political climate is in flux, Ukraine has made some advances toward democratic reform in its recent history. The progressive legislation that was passed between 2010 and 2013, along with mechanisms for civil society engagement in governance that were developed, helped Ukraine move closer to an Association Agreement (AA) with the European Union (EU). The Law on Public Associations provides an overarching framework for all non-governmental organizations in Ukraine. The Law on Charity and Charitable Associations, the Law on Access to Public Information, and the GOU Strategy of Government Policy on Civil Society Development and Priority Action Plan are supporting legislation and policy that have helped to establish a positive framework for Ukrainian civil society, which remains committed to supporting and furthering these gains.

Nevertheless, even with these significant and progressive civil society enabling legislative reforms, much more is needed to ensure a regulatory framework that is conducive to civil society and protects political and civil rights in Ukraine, and to prevent possible rollbacks. Remarkably, civil society and government have been unable to agree upon a legislative approach to governing assemblies, which has enabled Law enforcement agencies to apply administrative charges against civic activists engaging in peaceful protests. The legal status of peaceful assembly has become more important and convoluted as citizens, opposition and the government struggle over prosecution versus amnesty for those engaged in the nation-wide EuroMaidan protests. Even one year after the Maidan, all appeals regarding closing the criminal prosecution cases against activist are not considered, the judges are not charged for unlawful criminal prosecution of activists and the legal system is not changed (e.g. Events in Odessa on November 21).

Moreover, politicians commonly toy with the idea to control international funding to NGOs. Legislation labeling civil society organizations that receive funds from international donors as "foreign agents" attempt to restrict operations through high taxation, negative public image and stringent governmental control, essentially leaving NGOs unable to function. At the same time, Ukrainian citizens are excluded from decision making process on the national and local level. Ukrainian authority still remains closed and non-accountable to its citizens.

Besides that, new changes to the Tax Code came into affect on January 1st, 2015, brought new challenges to NGOs. With comprehensive amendments to the Tax Code of December 28, 2014,

some NGOs (condominiums and business associations) became subject to income tax, while others were freed from income taxes. At the same time, tax burden on charitable aid was increased and legal framework for public funding of NGOs faced negative changes as on December 28, 2014 the Parliament amended the Budget Code of Ukraine for the purpose of budget decentralization, but at the same time leaved out provisions of the Budget Code on mandatory expenses of national and local budgets for contest-based public financial support of NGOs.

In addition, homophobia is a commonplace in Ukraine and violence and discrimination against LGBT activists routinely goes unpunished. Discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity is broadly accepted by society and further legislative and policy protection of victims of discrimination is of paramount importance.

Finally, in the context of the conflict in the eastern part of Ukraine and the threat of separatism, many local democracy experts and MPs are against the adoption of the Law on Local Referendums. And they advised to discuss the adoption of this Law after studying the international experience and further consultations with stakeholders.

III. Program Approach

Building on successful legislative efforts of the current civil society program Ukraine National Initiatives to Enhance Reforms (UNITER), this activity supports CSO efforts to ensure proper implementation of the recently adopted progressive NGO legislation; further develop and introduce more favorable policies; protect against attempts to roll back progressive legislation or introduce new restrictive Laws; and improve the overall CSO enabling environment sustained through the development of local funding mechanisms. Efforts also include educating CSOs and appropriate government bodies on emerging legislative changes and encouraging compliance. In addition, UCIPR develops its technical and organizational capacity by implementing recommendations from a recipient contracted audit conducted in the summer of 2013, USAID's Non-U.S. pre award survey (NUPAS) and UNITER/Pact evaluations. This helps to improve the UCIPR internal capacities and further grow as a leader and driver of civil society legislative efforts.

UCIPR identified as priorities the below mentioned issues and the programmatic approach to improving the quality and content of legislation and policy for civil society through annual implementation plan and performance monitoring and evaluation plan. During the first year, the activity will focus primarily on expanding citizen and civic participation in the development and monitoring of legislation and policy that is in line with European standards. UCIPR will focus its activities on proactive improvements to the legislative and policy environment for Ukrainian civil society, as well as respond to and prevent any attempts to limit democratic governance through legislation and policy.

IV. Objectives, Results and Activities

All of the proposed activities fall under the following three objectives identified in the Cooperative Agreement:

The purpose of the activity is to improve the legislative and policy environment to be more conducive to civil society and reflect European standards. To achieve this, UCIPR will focus on three objectives:

Objective 1: (*notional 40%*) Quality of relevant civil society enabling legislation and policy improved

Objective 2: (*notional 40%*) Capacity of public officials and CSOs to ensure effective implementation of legislation and policy increased

Objective 3: (*notional 20%*) Technical and organizational capacity of UCIPR as a leader and driver of civil society legislative efforts increased.

Startup Activities

Project registration: in October 2014 UCIPR team submitted all required documents for Program Registration to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine and registered the project on November 10, 2014.

B. Activities by Objectives

Objective 1: Quality of relevant civil society enabling legislation and policy improved

During October 2015 – September 2016, UCIPR will continue to drive the Ukrainian civil society agenda as the leading CSO advocacy group on civil society legal improvements (as part of the *Reanimation Reforms Package* platform). UCIPR analyzed, developed and advocated for the new legislation and policy in order to improve the civil society-enabling environment. UCIPR monitored key changes in the legislative environment for civil society and responded to attempts to restrict civil society's ability to operate. UCIPR assisted in amending current legislation and policy to improve its quality, as well as monitored its implementation to ensure effective application.

The UCIPR holds ongoing monitoring of legislation that affects civil society, analyzed, developed and continues to advocate for new legislation and policy, in order to improve the civil society-enabling environment.

During the first half year of the project, UCIPR focused on the following **legislative priorities**:

- Changes to the Tax Code to reintroduce non-profit status for condominiums, creative unions and business associations and to decrease the tax burden on charitable aid;
- Amendments to Cabinet Decree #1049 on state financing of NGOs to improve procedure of distribution of public funding for NGOs according to latest problems and best practices and to open access to all NGOs (regardless of their territorial status) to support from the State Budget;
- Amendments to Cabinet Decree #996 on public councils and amendments to local acts on tools of local democracy to improve participatory democracy;
- Improvements to the Law on Volunteering, to enable NGOs to use volunteers without fulfilling cumbersome obligations;
- Improvements to legislation on freedom of peaceful assembly, in order to ensure that the legislation is in line with European standards;
- Amendment to the Budget Code of Ukraine in order to reintroduce expenses of local budgets for contest-based financial support of NGOs;
- Reestablishment of Coordinating Council for Civil Society Development under the President of Ukraine and adoption of Action plan for civil society development in 2015.

While working on legal reforms for civil society, UCIPR ensured participation of wide range of organizations, including charitable organizations, in program activities. UCIPR engaged NGOs through various methods and in the same way it strengthened its advocacy capacity and the advocacy capacity of its partner NGOs through trainings and international technical expertise. UCIPR collaborated closely with the NGO Capacity Building Market place in order to use vouchers to empower NGOs to advocate more efficiently for legal reforms.

Finally, UCIPR advocated (so far unsuccessfully) for the re-establishment of the Coordination Council on Civil Society Development under the President of Ukraine, which had to promulgate the Strategy of Government Policy on Civil Society Development and Priority Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy.

Results

- 1.1. Broad and effective civic networks formed that advance civil society legislative reforms - Advocacy efforts at national and local levels lead to positive changes in civil society legislation.
- 1.2. Appropriate by-Laws adopted to ensure implementation of progressive legislation (e.g., the Laws on Access to Public Information and on Public Associations).
- 1.3. CSO enabling legislation developed with significant input from CSOs (e.g., draft Law on Peaceful Assembly, Tax Laws, policy initiatives outlined in the Civil Society Strategy).
- 1.4. Public proposals for the draft Law on Local Referendum considered in final draft of the Law.

Indicators

- Number of CSOs receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions (*Foreign Assistance Framework standard indicator*)
- Number of CSO advocacy campaigns supported by UCIPR
- *Number of public policies adopted, repealed, changed or implemented with USG assistance⁹ (*Civic Oversight Project indicator*)
- *Percentage of CSOs with improved oversight capacity (*Civic Oversight Project indicator*)

Activities

Expected result 1.1: Broad and effective civic networks formed that advance civil society legislative reforms

Forming of networks to advance civil society legislation reforms

During the reporting period, UCIPR together with partner-CSOs formed two networks (Freedom of Assembly Network and Local Democracies Network) which were advancing civil society legislation reforms. Both networks developed and advocated common changes in the legislation and monitored the practices of its implementation. Freedom of Assembly Network focuses on the Law on Peaceful Assemblies and promoted freedom of assemblies in Ukraine. Local Democracies Network focuses on development of joint recommendations to the local councils and exchange with experience and documents among themselves. The Local Democracy Network is facilitating and advocating for adoption of decision regarding introduction of local democracy tools.

In October 29, 2014, UCIPR organized the first meeting of the Coalition on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly to discuss and draft the advocacy and communication strategies of joint advocacy campaign aimed at adoption of the Law on Freedom of Assembly. The coalition prepared analytical paper and received support from OSCE in this respect. After the negotiations held in February 2015, it was agreed to launch advocacy campaign for promoting and adopting the Law on securing peaceful assemblies. The coalition was joined by the experts from the Center of Political and Legal Reforms, Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, International Renaissance Foundation, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Members of Parliament and other decision-makers.

In the framework of the advocacy campaign, the meetings have been held with MPs, including Ms. Iryna Lunko and Mr. Hryhoriy Nemyrya, Chairperson of the Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations. During the meeting with Mr. Nemyrya, the opportunities for cooperation between Coalition and the Committee have been discussed, and

agreed upon joint position and the plan of advocacy campaign for adoption of the draft Law on guarantees for freedom of peaceful assemblies. The participants of coalition have already started the work on the draft Law, taking into account new challenges in the Eastern Ukraine.

Simultaneously with the forming of the Freedom of Peaceful Assembly Network, UCIPR formed the Local Democracy Network which started to work on improving local democracy in Ukraine. As a leading partner of the network, UCIPR initiated a series of activities aimed at supporting local partners, namely it worked with the local organizations (Youth of Democratic Alliance of Mykolayiv and Ivano-Frankivsk, Polissya Institute) and provided methodological, information and expert support to network partners in their efforts for advocating the introduction local democracy mechanisms in Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernihiv and Mykolayiv.

UCIPR survey on regulation of Peaceful Assembly

During 2014-2015, the UCIPR team conducted survey on peaceful assembly regulations at the local level. The questionnaire contained two questions: whether the decisions on peaceful assembly procedures are approved by the local council and which legal acts serve as the ground for local council decision in case of holding peaceful assembly. At the same time, it is important to stress out that the Court can determine whether peaceful assembly can be held.

Having analyzed the responses, the UCIPR team prepared analytical report and info-graphic on regulation of freedom of peaceful assembly at the local level. The report showed that local authorities try to restrict freedom of peaceful assemblies in different ways, either by adoption of the special regulation or by application of the Soviet Union Presidium Decree of 1988. Out of 283 responses, received by UCIPR from local authorities, there are 32 decisions on approving special procedures for holding peaceful assemblies, 2 decisions are in the process of drafting (in Rakhiv, Zakarpattya Oblast and in Nemyriv, Vinnytsya) and 63 cases of Soviet Decree application.

Usually, local councils establish the limitations for holding peaceful assemblies, such as: establishing deadline for notification, limitation of participants' number, and allocation of the particular place, prohibition of the peaceful assembly near public authorities' buildings or prohibition of peaceful assembly in general. Absence of the special Law motivates local authorities to regulate this issue by their opinion or to apply the USSR regulations. *Full text of the report is attached.*

The report was presented by Ms. Anastasiya Shymchuk, UCIPR expert, during the round table on the violation of Ukrainian legislation on freedom of peaceful assembly by the local-governance bodies and the need for adoption of the Law on Peaceful Assembly organized by the Institute Respublika and the Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations.

Expected result 1.2: Advocacy efforts at national and local levels lead to positive changes in civil society legislation

Consultations with decision-makers on local democracy, public funding of NGOs and public participation in decision-making

UCIPR Experts became members of working groups of the Ministry of Justice on development of legal acts on public participation in decision-making (amendments to Cabinet's Decrees # 996, # 976 and development of new draft Law on public participation in decision-making). In addition, experts of the UCIPR took part in meetings and consultations with governmental officials on issues of public funding of NGOs (central level, consultations with the ministry for Youth and Sports) and public participation in decision-making on the level of Cabinet of Ministers (national level).

In addition to the work for improvement legislative environment at the national level, UCIPR actively provides support to the local organizations for improvement their advocacy capacities at the local level. Experts provided consultations and trainings to the local partners. Namely, Ivan Lukerya and Maksym Latsyba, UCIPR experts participated in the advocacy club organized by Kramatorsk NGOs on November 1-2, 2014 where they held seminar “Advocacy and influence on the local authority”. During this advocacy club, the local NGOs received mechanisms for influencing local authority, for instruments for introduction local democracy and tools of access to public information. After holding the advocacy club, it was formed NGO coalition for development and implementation of the mechanisms of local democracy in Kramatorsk.

Under the initiative “Uniting for Reforms: Cooperation between Authority and Civil Society”, Ivan Lukerya, UCIPR expert, held a series of public discussions in Vinnytsya (November 19 and December 10, 2014), Chernihiv (November 21, 2014 and December 12, 2014) and Mykolayiv (December 25-26, 2015). During these public discussions, the UCIPR experts explained how the local democracy tools can help local NGOs to influence local authorities and how to be included into decision making process at the local level.

After these public discussions, NGO coalitions for development and implementation of the mechanisms of local democracy have been formed, in particular advocating for the adoption of the draft regulation on local initiatives in Chernihiv and draft regulation on public hearings in Mykolayiv. The draft regulations were submitted for consideration of the City Councils on March 12, 2015. However, due to the absence of political will and strong opposition of local authorities, the draft regulations were not passed. In the future, UCIPR will continue to support the coalitions till the adoption of these Regulations.

During public hearings on introduction of changes to Ivano-Frankivsk City Charter and implementation of the mechanisms of local democracy on March 4, 2015, UCIPR team (Maksym Latsyba and Ivan Lukerya) facilitated the dialogue between local NGOs and representatives of city council. More over, they held public meeting with the local NGOs and explained them the possibilities for cooperation among NGOs and authority through the mechanisms of participatory democracy.

In addition, UCIPR experts joined working groups under Kyiv City council for development of the Draft regulation on public hearings in Kyiv City. In the framework of the work, UCIPR experts developed and provided working group with the final draft regulations on public hearings in Kyiv City. The draft will be submitted for Kyiv City council consideration in April 2015.

On March 23-27, 2015, Ivan Lukerya and Maksym Latsyba participated in the public events in Chernivtsi, Rivne, and Lutsk where they held consultations with the cities leadership regarding the prospective for introduction of the local democracy mechanisms. After the consultations, Chernivtsi and Rivne NGOs formed coalitions for advocating for such instruments.

Adoption of Amendments to the Law on Volunteerism

Since December 2014, the UCIPR team ran advocacy campaign for facilitating introduction of amendments to the Law on Volunteerism No. 1408 aimed at abandoning the binding registration of volunteering organizations. As a result of successful advocacy campaign, the parliament passed the amendments to the Law on Volunteerism which envisages such novelties as: to allow everybody conducting volunteer activity, to avoid bureaucratic procedure for registration of volunteer organizations, to provide the right to pupils to carry volunteer activities, to liquidate the burdening requirement to have insurance for volunteers.

This advocacy campaign was joined by other partners, namely the Ukrainian Philanthropist Forum, Volunteer Organization “Alternative-B”, Coordinator of Program of UN Volunteers and others. In addition, MPs and public officials were invited.

In the course of campaign, the following meetings have been held: with MPs (Mr. Ivan Krulko, Ms. Anna Romanova, Ms. Olena Masorina, Mr. Mykhola Velyckovych, Mr. Artur Palatanyy), and others members of the dedicated committee, MP Aids, Secretariat of the Committee on Family, Youth Policy, Sport and Tourism, representatives of Ministry of Social Policy, Ombudsman Office, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Presidential Administration, Reanimation Reform Package and other subjects who were involved in the decision-making process. Some of these partners helped to advocate for this Law. As a result, the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Volunteerism was signed by 15 MPs.

Throughout the campaign, information materials have been developed, including samples of the appeals to MPs, Speaker of the Parliament, Chairperson and members of the Committee on Family, Youth Policy, Sport and Tourism. More over, the UCIPR team launched campaign in the social media, info-graphic and petition with the demand to sign the draft Law N. 1408. In addition, two public gatherings have been held near Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (before first and second reading) demanding to adopt the draft Law No. 1408.



During all entire campaign, the UCIPR team coordinated the work on the text of draft Law. Ms. Anastasiya Shymchuk, UCIPR expert, participated in development of amendments to the draft Law (for second reading) and prepared modifications to the draft Law comparative table. She also actively participated in the meetings of Committee and Committee working group where the draft Law was discussed. Most of the developed amendments were taken into consideration during working group meetings and included into the comparative table.

On February 14, 2015, Ms. Shumchuk participated in the radio show on Hromadske Radio regarding the need to pass this draft Law¹. In addition, she presented the report during the Philanthropists Forum organized by the Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum on February 26, 2015².

¹ <http://hromadskeradio.org/2015/02/15/derzhava-ne-maye-obmezhuвати-volonterskiy-ruh-anastasiya-shimchuk/>

² <http://ufb.org.ua/news.htm?id=4026>



As a result of successful advocacy campaign, the Parliament passed the draft Law No. 1408 in the first reading and in few weeks it passed it in the second reading. The Law was signed by the President on March 30, 2015³.

Expected result 1.3: Appropriate by-Laws adopted to ensure implementation of progressive legislation (e.g., the Laws on Access to Public Information and on Public Associations)

Adoption of Amendments to Cabinet’s Decree # 1049 (with provisions on wider application of contests-based procedures for public funding of NGOs)

UCIPR Expert initiated consultations with ministries and the Secretary of the Cabinet of Ministers to facilitate support for amendments to Cabinet’s Decree # 1049. Amendments were developed aimed at improving the procedure for public funding distribution for NGOs accordingly to the most burning issues and the best practices, as well as to open access to all NGOs (regardless of their territorial status) to funding from the State Budget.

In early 2015, UCIPR effectively stopped the initiative of the Ministry of Finance to withdraw Cabinet’s Decree # 1049. The Ministry requested the Prime Minister to initiate withdrawal of the Decree without any consultations with the public. Such step may have resulted in considerable worsening of the practice of public financial support of NGOs on regional level. To counteract this initiative, the UCIPR experts facilitated an appeal from the MP Ivan Krulko to the Prime Minister with a request to hold public consultations regarding withdrawal of the Decree # 1049.

As a result, on March 5th public hearings regarding withdrawal of the Decree # 1049 were held by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and a decision not to withdraw the Decree was adopted. Based on the result of public hearings, facilitated by the UCIPR, the Ministry of Economy rejected the initiative to withdraw Cabinet’s Decree # 1049.

³ <http://ucipr.org.ua/publications/prezident-pidpisav-zakon-na-pidtrimku-volonterskogo-rukhu-v-ukraini>

As of March 2015, draft amendments to Cabinet's Decree # 1049 are finalized, agreed among key ministries and prepared for submission to the Cabinet. 90% of UCIPR's proposals are considered in the draft decree; the most innovative provision of the draft decree - eligibility of all public associations, regardless of their territorial status, to apply for funding from central budget.

Adoption of annual Action Plans for implementation of the Strategy of State Policy for Civil Society Development for 2015

UCIPR initiated restoration of Coordinating Council for Civil Society Development under the President of Ukraine and facilitated support for this initiative from officials of President's Administration and expert community. In October-December 2014, the UCIPR initiated an appeal from leading think tank to the President of Ukraine with



request to restore Coordinating Council on Civil Society Development under the President of Ukraine. The appeal was signed by representatives of eight leading think tanks of Ukraine, including UCIPR, Center for Political and Legal Reforms, CCC Creative Center, Laboratory of Legal Initiatives. UCIPR organized two working groups with leading experts and representative of the President's Administration, as a result of which priority activities for reloaded Coordinating Council and key provisions of Annual Action Plan for Civil Society Development (to be adopted as President's Decree) were defined. Together with other stakeholders, the UCIPR developed proposals for amending the list of member of the Council and the regulation on the Council.

In December 2014 March 2015, experts of the UCIPR lead series of consultations with representatives of President's Administration to ensure support for restoration of Coordinating Council for Civil Society Development in with amended list of members. As a result, Mr. Rostyslav Pavlenko, Deputy Head of President's Administration has ensured his support for this initiative. As of end of March, the **Head of President's Administration supports the idea of reactivation of Coordinating Council.** However, the decision was postponed due to blocking of the re-establishment of Coordination Council under the President of Ukraine by Mr. Dmytro Shymkiv, Deputy Head of Presidential Administration, and Ms. Nataliya Popovych, Ukrainian Crisis Media Centre. UCIPR plans to continue advocate for this issue and meet both opponents to explain the importance of such Council for civil society development.

Adoption of Amendments to Cabinet's Decree # 996

On October 2014, the UCIPR experts joined working group under the Ministry of Justice to develop amendments to the Cabinet's Decree # 996 for improving regulations on formation and operations

of public councils. During November – December 2014, the working group held four meetings during which the UCIPR experts developed proposals to the Decree # 996 and held consultations with leadership of the Ministry of Justice and Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and other decision-makers, to facilitate adoption of proposals, developed under the leadership of UCIPR. As a result of successful negotiations, the UCIPR proposals were taken into consideration in the final draft Cabinet Decree # 996 which was submitted for consideration of the Cabinet of Ministers on March 25, 2015. However the decision on adoption was not passed. UCIPR plans to hold consultations with the Ministry of Justice representatives regarding adoption of the amendments to the Cabinet Decree # 996.

Adoption of Cabinet's Decree on information for official use

During December 2014 – March 2015, UCIPR held consultations with the officials of the State Archive Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Justice regarding improvement and adoption of amendments to the Cabinet Decree on information for official use. UCIPR analyzed the Draft Decree and held consultations with independent experts in the area of access to public information regarding introduction amendments to the Cabinet's Decree on information for official use. Based on the consultations, it was developed draft proposals for amendments of the Cabinet's Decree on information for official use which were submitted to the Ministry of Justice in March 2015.

Expected result 1.4: CSO enabling legislation developed with significant input from CSOs (e.g., draft Law on Peaceful Assembly, Tax Laws, policy initiatives outlined in the Civil Society Strategy).

Development of amendments to tax legislation for public associations and charitable organizations

After the adoption of amendments to the Tax Code in late December 2014, UCIPR focused its efforts on restoration of non-profit status of number of NGOs types and on reduction of tax burden on charitable aid. For this purpose, UCIPR developed and advocated the adoption of amendments to the Tax Code.

Expert of the UCIPR held analysis of new edition of the Tax code in terms of new tax environment for non-profit organizations and charitable activities and developed a report (<http://www.ucipr.kiev.ua/publications/podatkove-seredovishche-dlia-gromadskoi-ta-blagodiinoi-diiialnosti-z-2015-roku-novi-mozhливosti-novi-i-stari-bareri>).

Experts of the UCIPR in partnership with experts of Reanimation Reform Package and Ukrainian Forum of Charities developed draft Law "On Amendments to the Tax code (on taxation of non-profit organizations). Through consultations and other advocacy activities, UCIPR facilitated submission of the draft Law for consideration of the Parliament; 22 MPs from almost all political factions signed the draft Law. The draft Law was registered on February 5th, 2015 number 2049 (http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=53883).

On February 26th, 2015 UCIPR together with Ukrainian Forum of Charities held a round table "Legislation for charities: what has changed and what needs to be changed". The event was held within international conference "Charity and volunteerism in action: rescuing, reconciling, building the future", organized by Ukrainian Forum of Charities. During the round table experts of the UCIPR presented review of new tax environment for civic and charitable activities and expressed their support for the draft Law # 2049.

To inform wider community of NGOs about changes in Tax environment, Anastasiya Krasnosilska, UCIPR expert, held a webinar "Tax innovations for public associations and charitable organizations; what to expect".

Platform for the webinar was provided by ISAR/Ednannia. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmcIF2l6WdE>)



UCIPR facilitated support of parliamentary coalition for the draft Law and its quick adoption Law in the first reading. On March 18, 2015 draft Law # 2049 was adopted in the first reading.

Informal NGO partnership for advocating of the draft Law # 2049 was created under the leadership of the UCIPR. As of March 2015, partnership includes representatives of Reanimation Reform Package, Ukrainian Union of Entrepreneurs, Ukrainian Forum of Charities and Civic Network "OPORA".



In late March UCIPR continued advocacy efforts aimed on quick adoption of draft Law # 2049 in the second reading.

In addition, UCIPR imitated consultations with the Ministry of Finance and State Fiscal Agency on development of new regulation on the registry of non-profit organizations. As a result of these consultations, key amendments to the Registry were defined and agreed on. UCIPR will continue consultations until adoption of the Registry with proposals from public experts considered in it.

Development of amendments to new Law on peaceful assemblies

During October 2014 UCIPR team coordinated several meetings with participants of Partnership “Freedom of Peaceful Assembly”. On October 29, 2014 Freedom of Peaceful Assembly Partnership held first meeting in the UCIPR office. During the meeting, the participants discussed current situation in the area of freedom of peaceful assemblies, set the priorities for the work and future steps, as well as started to draft the analytical report on Law on Peaceful Assembly in partnership with the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, Information Centre on Human Rights and the Center of Political and Legal Reforms. The participants of the coalition prepared action plan and defined the area of responsibilities.

During October 2014 – March 2015, the series of meetings of coalition and joint work of the coalition aimed at securing peaceful assembly in the framework of the work over National Human Rights Strategy 2015-2020 was organized. The coalition members participated in the series of meetings organized by the Ministry of Justice. It was developed proposals to the drafts Laws on peaceful assemblies and CSOs. In addition, negotiations with representatives of the Ministry of Justice and working groups’ participants have been held. Ms. Shymchuk was a rapporteur from the working group which was dealing with right for peaceful assemblies.

As a result of research on regulation of peaceful assemblies by the local authorities, the UCIPR team prepared analytical report which was followed by info-graphic, developed with the purpose to improve perception of the analysis. The info-graphic contains images of those local self-government bodies which passed separate regulations on peaceful assemblies or apply Soviet Union Presidium Decree.

Promoting local democracy tools

During December 2014 – March 2015, Mr. Ivan Lukerya, UCIPR expert, developed the model local act on citizens’ access to sessions of local councils. The draft act was made public via the UCIPR web-site and it was discussed from the Council of Europe, Institute of Media Law, and Political Education Institute and members of local councils. The Draft Decree was also provided to the local self-government bodies and local NGOs for adoption at the local level.

During the reporting period, UCIPR developed drafts of five model acts on mechanisms of local democracy: on local initiatives, on public hearings, on general citizens’ meetings, on public consultations, and on civic expertise of local councils. These model acts were distributed among interested organizations, local self-government bodies and they were made public at the UCIPR website.

UCIPR experts developed the following documents:

- Act on public hearings in Mykolayiv City
- Amendments to the Ivano-Frankivsk City Charter, Act on local initiatives and Act on public hearings in Ivano-Frankivsk City
- Act on local initiatives in Chernihiv City

- Act on public hearings in Kyiv City.

Objective 2: Capacity of public officials and CSOs to ensure effective implementation of legislation and policy increased

The earlier adoption of progressive civil society legislation was a significant step forward, but it will not improve the regulatory environment unless legislation is properly implemented. Organizations and public officials at the local level are often uneducated about new legislation and are left without the skills, capacity and support to effectively implement or use it. Furthermore, civic and governmental stakeholders do not often monitor outcomes of implemented regulations in order to make adjustments and improvements. Therefore, it is important to assist local stakeholders in meaningful implementation and use of civil society enabling legislation and policy through awareness-raising, technical support and monitoring efforts.

During October 2014 – March 2015, UCIPR educated stakeholders on key issues in NGO enabling legislation which included the following Laws and mechanisms:

- Law on Public Associations; Decree #996 on Public Councils;
- new Tax Code and new legal instruments outlined in the Law on Charity and Charitable Organizations;
- and opportunities for increased access to information and participation in government policy and decision making through recently adopted legislation.

Additionally, UCIPR launched hot line to provide support to CSOs, published brochures, infographics and other information materials as well as used webinars to explain the changes into CSO legislation.

Moreover, UCIPR experts provided consultations, methodological recommendations and participated in partners events, namely ISAR III Capacity Development Forum “Culture of Peace: How NGOs Can Develop their Capacity for Dialogue and Leadership of Change to Build and Strengthen a Culture of Peace in Ukraine”. They also provided legal assistance to NGO partners related to NGO *functioning* and operation and supported local NGO partners in the regions.

Results

- 2.1. Newly adopted progressive legislation and policies related to civil society properly implemented (i.e., Laws on Public Associations, on Charitable Foundations and on Access to Public Information, and the Strategy on State Policy for Support of Civil Society Development)
- 2.2. CSOs better informed about the improved legislative enabling environment
- 2.3. CSOs increase use of the improved legislative enabling environment
- 2.4. Implementation capacity of public officials improved
- 2.5. Procedures for citizen participation in local decision-making improved
- 2.6. Citizens better informed about opportunities to participate in local decision-making

Indicators

- Number of unlawful registration rejections of public associations
- Number of consultations on CSO legislation provided to public officials and CSOs
- Number of methodological recommendations¹⁰ developed for public officials and CSOs
- Number of training days (on CSO legislation) provided to public officials and CSOs
- Number of CSO legal aid offices or center in the regions
- Number of regional legal support coalition members

Activities

Expected result 2.1: Newly adopted progressive legislation and policies related to civil society properly implemented (i.e., Laws on Public Associations, on Charitable Foundations and on Access to Public Information, and the Strategy on State Policy for Support of Civil Society Development).

Through hotline, UCIPR monitored whether the Laws on Public Associations, on Charitable Foundations and on Access to Public Information are properly implemented. It also taught CSOs to use instruments provided by CSOs enabling environment legislation (i.e., Laws on Public Associations, on Charitable Foundations and on Access to Public Information, and the Strategy on State Policy for Support of Civil Society Development). UCIPR monitored the implementation of civil society enabling legislation at local and national levels.

Analysis of situation with the implication of the Law on Public Associations

The UCIPR team communicates with staff of the Ukrainian State Registry Service (USRC). In January 2015 State Registry Service was liquidated and the process of transmission of its functions to the Ministry of Justice has been initiated. UCIPR keeps working relationship with the former staff of the State Registry Service and they are informed about the potential changes in the area of registry of civic organizations. After meetings with USRC staff, it became possible to develop joint position regarding reforming of the USRC and requirements for the transferring of the registration services to the Centers of Administrative Services Provisions.

UCIPR constantly informs partners regarding any changes in the work of registry offices. In May-June, 2015, it also plans to hold campaign for improving related legislation.

Analysis of situation with the implication of the Law on Access to Public Information

According to the new legislation on access to public information, citizens have free access to the plenary sessions of local councils and local council permanent commissions. Therefore, Mr. Ivan Lukerya, UCIPR expert, analyzed legal frameworks for the public access to abovementioned sessions which was presented in the form of report and info-graphic made public via the UCIPR website, media, partners and local self-governance bodies. The research showed that the conflict existed between legal frameworks and practice of legislation application. Therefore, on March 2015 UCIPR launched campaign for monitoring the practice of application the legislation on free citizens' access to plenary sessions of the local councils and permanent local councils' commissions. All findings of the analysis were outlined in the report. In addition, campaigns were organized for improvement the practice of implementation of legislation on access to public information.

Expected result 2.2: CSOs better informed about the improved legislative enabling environment.

UCIPR educated stakeholders on key issues in NGO enabling legislation and it conducted trainings on recent civil society enabling Laws and decrees, as well as the main changes brought about by new legislation, such as Law on Public Associations; Decree #996 on Public Councils; new Tax Code and new legal instruments (e.g., endowments) outlined in the Law on Charity and Charitable Organizations. UCIPR provided legal assistance to NGO partners related to NGO functioning and operation.

Development of information materials for improving awareness among target audience

During September – October 2014, the UCIPR team developed design and distributed around 2000 information stickers about availability and functioning of the hotlines on registration issues of public associations and charitable foundations. They contained information in which way to contact hotline and how to receive information about CSO registration, operation and closing etc. The information stickers were displayed near registry offices and regional justice departments providing registration services for civil society organizations and charitable foundations, as well as distributed among participants of the UCIPR and partner public events (in particular Capacity Development Forums, Helsinki Human Rights Union Offices etc.)

As the result of this campaign, two important goals were met:

1) to inform activists and founders of CSOs about possibility to receive consultations regarding this issue; 2) to increase the number of requests though hot lines.



*Проінформуйте нас, якщо Вам несправді відмовили у реєстрації організації

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During reporting period, the UCIPR team designed booklet about the benefits of the Law on Access to Public Information and 2000 booklets “*Simple Steps How to register Civil Society Organization. Five Simple Steps*”, developed for the local communities and in simplified way, it explained the citizen rights for public information and registration process of CSO. Both booklets were distributed in the local communities, via the UCIPR website, during partner events.

Civil Society Magazine

On March 2015, UCIPR prepared and publish on the UCIPR website first edition of Civil Society Magazine. The magazine contained information about taxation of non-profit organization changes, peaceful assembly regulation at the local level, and local democracy in Uzhgorod etc⁴.

⁴ <http://www.ucipr.kiev.ua/publications/zhurnal-gromadianske-suspilstvo-120-2015-rik>.

Expected result 2.3: CSOs increase use of the improved legislative enabling environment.

Call center for providing support with legal issues

In September 2014 UCIPR launched hotline for CSOs and Charitable Foundations aimed at assisting CSOs on application of the Laws on Public Associations and on Charitable Foundations. Information stickers on how to register CSOs and charitable foundations distributed among different stakeholders. Any CSO or charitable organization can contact hotline by e-mail, phone, via website or facebook during working hours and receive support, advice or recommendation from the UCIPR team. Starting from the launching of the hotline, UCIPR received more than 100 requests. As our records show, the hotline became a valuable resource for many CSOs including those which are registered on the territories uncontrolled by the Ukrainian authorities. CSOs are mostly interested how to prepare documents for registration of new organization, to change geographic area of operation and place of location of organization, peculiarities of changing of place of location and statutory documents for organizations registered on the territory under ATO. Also, due to the latest changes to the Tax Code, UCIPR received a lot of questions regarding taxation of charitable organizations. We can also observe an increase in inquiries from Donbas organizations. Most of them are related to the changes of the place of location and leadership bodies, for example:

Serhiy Chystyakov: "Unfortunately, after seizing control over Enakiyev, our organization appeared on the territory ungoverned by the Ukrainian authority and the documents are lost, therefore we have to re-register our organization."

Vadym: "Our organization brought all documents with us and we would like to change the Director. What we have to do in this case, if our organization is registered in Luhansk?"

All inquiries to the hotline are registered in the hotline data base.

With the support of Partner Organization from Luhansk (Luhansk Civic Initiative), UCIPR started the work on development of algorithm for renewing CSOs activity registered in the east of Ukraine and Crimea.

Some CSO activists come to the UCIPR office for the private consultation. As example, UCIPR office was visited by Mickael Shchur (original last name - Vintoniv), TV presenter, with the request to receive consultation on CSO registration process.



To simplify the registration process for CSOs, UCIPR team developed interactive map on registry offices location in Kyiv⁵, which was spread in social networks and on UCIPR website.

Participation in international conference “Civil Society and State: changing roles in the changed context”

UCIPR experts, Maksym Latsyba, Anastasiya Shymchuk and Anastasiya Krasnosilska, participated in international conference “Civil Society and State: changing roles in the changed context” jointly held on October 30-31, 2014 by the State Registration Service of Ukraine and OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, with the support of the Ministry of Justice in Ukraine and the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. The event gathered Ukrainian authorities, representatives of state authorities from European countries, national civil society organizations (CSOs), national and international experts and members of the international donor community operating in Ukraine and dealing with the civil society development issues.

Assessment of implication of Government Decree # 996 to identify the gaps and problems

Starting from November 2014, Project team constantly improves its knowledge and capacities of the partners and civic activists. In addition to trainings and consultations, UCIPR organized and held in its office three one-day workshops (with practical cases) for CSOs activists regarding specifics of NGO legislation and NGOs registration procedures. Because of the format of the workshop and small number of participants, it was possible to allocate required time for each participant. Each workshop covered separate issue identified as very important for the target audience.

During the workshops, the UCIPR team provided sample of the documents, useful materials, and provided consultations for participants if the case happened after the workshop. The participants were able to discuss complicated cases and find the solutions for specific situations. 29 people (10 men and 19 women) attended these workshops. The group of participants was formed through the open announcement.



⁵<https://mapsengine.google.com/map/viewer?authuser=0&authuser=0&hl=uk&hl=uk&mid=zJKHkN7CUgjs.kipzPXHY8dXg>

All workshops, which were held in the UCIPR office, were very practical and oriented on the small number of participants. After completion of the events, the participants were able to complete the feedback form. All forms were collected for internal analysis and future planning.

This questionnaire included the questions regarding the quality of the workshop, possible improvements and the timing. Based on the feedback from the participants, UCIPR received quite high evaluation of the workshop quality. Most of the participants expressed confidence in the importance of the knowledge received during the workshops and recommended to establish advocacy club.



On March 26, 2015, Workshop “How to establish civil society organization in accordance with the Law on CSOs” (12 participants (4 men and 8 women) from Kyiv, Kherson, Ternopil, Zaporizhzhya, Sumy).

The topic of this workshop was very important as UCIPR received more than 60 applications. Some of them were invited to the separate workshop on April 8-9, 2015. Some of the applicant received consultations online.

Workshop “Advocacy Campaigns Planning” held on February 13, 2015, was attended by 10 people (5 men and 5 women), including partners from the advocacy coalition for the adoption the Draft Law on Volunteerism No. 1408. It was intended that the workshop would improve the advocacy capacity of the coalition participants at the local and national level. The participants were selected from the applicants from Kyiv, Brovary, Vinnytsya and Bar.

Workshop “How to bring organization Charter in compliance with the Law on CSOs” attracted 7 people (1 man and 6 women) from Chernihiv, Luhansk, Lviv, Lviv oblast, Kyiv, Vinnytsya. The main attention was paid to those organizations which were registered according to the former Law and now decided to amend their charters to comply with the new Law on CSOs.

Expected result 2.5: Procedures for citizen participation in local decision-making improved

Analysis of the situation with local decision-making process at the local level

In the frameworks of the support to local coalitions for advocating for local democracy tools and holding consultations with representatives of authority, studying the practice of application of the mechanisms of citizen participation in decision making process, UCIPR experts conducted a number of events:

- in advocacy club of local NGOs in Kramatorsk on November 1-2, 2014;
- in public discussions “Uniting for Reforms: Cooperation between Authority and Community” in Vinnytsya (November 19 and December 10, 2014) and in Chernihiv (November 21 and December 12, 2014);
- in meeting of local coalition on development of advocacy plan for adoption of the act on public hearings in Mykolayiv (December 25-26, 2014);
- in working group of experts and CSOs of Chernihiv City with representatives of Chernihiv local council regarding the adoption of Act on local initiatives (November 25, 2014 and February 10, 2015):

- in public hearings on amendments to the Statute of the local community and the implementation mechanisms of local democracy in Ivano-Frankivsk (March 4, 2015).

They also visited Chernivtsi (On March 18, 2015), Lutsk (on March 24, 2015), Rivne (March 25-25, 2015), Cherkasy (March 27, 2015). In all cities, the UCIPR experts had meetings with local NGOs, gave interviews to the local media, and held consultations with representatives of local governments. During these meetings, the work of local governments, citizen participation in decision-making process, prospective mechanisms of local democracy have been discussed. In addition, Mr. Lukerya made public presentations in Lutsk (March 24) and Rivne (March 25) on the reform of local government in Ukraine, which was attended by the representatives of city and regional councils; village, town and city mayors; representatives of oblast administrations.

Interview with the interlocutors showed that the citizen participation in decision making process is very low at the local level. In the majority of cities, local authorities do not want to increase citizen participation in decision making and local activists have lack of skills and capacities for advocating for their rights to be included into decision making process, particularly this is a case for Mykolayiv, Chernivtsi and Kramatorsk (less for Chernihiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne).

Objective 3: UCIPR's technical and organizational capacity increased to serve as a leader and driver of civil society legislative efforts

During the reporting period, UCIPR worked on strengthening its own technical and organizational capacity by implementing recommendations from recent surveys, assessments and audits. The priority was given to the organization capacity strengthening, specifically further institutionalizing of the governance structure, and improvement of the procurement, financial and HR systems in the organization. UCIPR was first working on implementing NUPAS and audit recommendations focused primarily on organizational capacities. It also worked on strengthening other aspects of its organizational development as recommended by UNITER/Pact's 2013 assessment of UCIPR.

During this period, the organization was re-registered in accordance with the new legislation and ensured that the statute clearly defines its organizational governance system. The financial system and internal controls were improved by clarifying procedures, ensuring back-up of accounting data and limiting access to accounting documents. The HR system was improved by enforcing a timesheet system and remuneration policies. The organization developed its Project Manual.

At the same time, UCIPR also worked on strengthening its own technical capacity, it further developed its legal expertise and started to use English language resources in its analysis. UCIPR staff participated in study visits, international industry events and in-country networking activities.

Moreover, UCIPR improved its communication with the international community and donors by developing policy updates and introducing the practice of sending out English-language information updates to key stakeholders. Besides expert roundtables and participation in government working groups, UCIPR worked more closely with citizens and NGOs whose interests the organization represents. As a result, UCIPR improved its ability to influence the public agenda.

Finally, UCIPR refined its strategic plan for the next 3 years; developed and improved UCIPR's communications strategy; regular policy updates (in Ukrainian); membership (informal) in international networks etc.

Results

3.1. UCIPR's organizational capacity strengthened – governance structure, procurement processes, financial and human resources systems, monitoring and evaluation, communication and outreach

3.2. UCIPR's technical capacity improved – legal analysis and expertise

3.3. UCIPR's capacity to influence a broad community of stakeholders increased – government, NGOs, citizens and the international organizations

Indicators:

- Number of NUPAS and audit recommendations implemented
- Number of CSOs partnering with UCIPR
- Number of international donors partnering with UCIPR
- Number of regular policy updates (in Ukrainian and English)

Activities

Expected result 3.1: UCIPR's organizational capacity strengthened – governance structure, procurement processes, financial and human resources systems, monitoring and evaluation, communication and outreach.

During the reporting period, UCIPR has started to strengthen its own technical and organizational capacity by implementing recommendations from recent surveys, assessments and audits. Recommendations from USAID's pre-award assessment (Non-U.S. Organization Pre-Award Survey – NUPAS), a recipient contracted audit (RCA) and UNITER/Pact's holistic capacity development assessment will form the basis of UCIPR's advanced capacity development roadmap. UCIPR worked on implementing NUPAS and audit recommendations focused primarily on organizational capacities.

Implementation of NUPAS audit recommendations

During September 2014– March 2015, UCIPR re-registered the organization in accordance with the new legislation and ensure that the statute clearly defines its organizational governance system and it finished the registration of the new UCIPR's statute developed in comply with NUPAS and Ukrainian legislation, in particular the Law on Civil Society Organizations. In addition, a new independent Board and developed policies for the Board (election/removal of members, main tasks, approaches, frequency of meetings and formalization of decisions etc.) were approved. The Board was formed with five people from business, education and international NGOs. On December 8, 2014 the Board held its first establishing meeting.



First meeting of the Board

UCIPR also introduced written standards governing the performance of UCIPR's employees who are immediate family members and engaged in different management functions.

During reporting period, UCIPR established formal procedure for backup and recovery of the documents and accounting software data. It also introduced the user in accounting system with “read only” access. In addition, it is replacing 1C 7.7 with upgraded version of licensed accounting software 1C 8.2 with configuration for NGOs.

Since December 2014, Project Directors reviews bank statements and accounting records (1C) on the monthly basis and signs the reconciliation statements whether the data are correct. UCIPR minimizes the use of cash in its operations. Currently, cash operations account for 1 % of total amount of operations (utilities, tickets reimbursement of the UCIPR events participants).

Since October 2014, UCIPR convened a procurement panel for all purchases over the \$1000 threshold for goods or services. To simplify and speed up the procurement process, it decided to select permanent goods and services providers.

UCIPR is launching the system of the formal control system over cash and EFT payments in compliance with both Title 22 of Code of Federal Regulations Section 226.21(b)(6) and OMB A-123”Management’s Responsibility for Internal Control”. With the selection of new Finance Director UCIPR assigned him the responsibility for reviewing the expenses for reasonableness and availability of funds, before the accounting records are made by a different person in the payment process (Maker – Checker approach). He also started to develop the system of producing financial statements on a quarterly basis for overall assessment of financial position of the Organization.

In March 2015, UCIPR finalized work on development of clear HR system and policies – clear division of staff functions, responsibilities and subordination based on actual work being carried out in the Organization’s different activities; upgrade of a pay scale for both permanent and temporary employees using the same rates for compensating staff for work on all projects; development of the detailed time sheets with special codes assigned to each activity/project and to develop written procedure about the timesheets reports approval. It has developed a timesheet template with special codes assigned to each activity/project and written procedure about the timesheets management, which should assign the responsibility for monitoring work activities and approving timesheets to each employee's direct supervisor prior to making salary payments. In addition, it compiled personal files which include employees’ personal data, CV, selection process documentation, job description and annual performance evaluations.

Strengthening of UCIPR’s organizational capacity

During reporting period, UCIPR experts participated in trainings organized by the USAID Project “Financial Management Capacity Development Initiative in Ukraine” (FMCDI). In particular, UCIPR staff took part in the following trainings:

December 11-12, 2014. UCIPR representatives took part in the training about financial management, human resources, procurement, administration and other operational support functions according to USAID’s standards.

February 11, 2015. Training in Introduction to finance management for non-finance project staff, further divided into the following discussion topics:

- Budgeting and Form 1034;
- Allowability of expenses and procurement of goods and services;
- Personnel time and attendance, and allowability;
- Travel and transportation expenditures, and allowability; and
- Discussion of issues encountered by participants in the course of implementation of USAID recommendations.

March 12, 2015. Roundtable aimed at sharing knowledge and experience with use and implementation of 1C accounting software during which the participants were able to discuss the following topics:

- Use of 1C software by NGOs' in a multi-donor environment;
- Problems and solutions in coding/implementing 1C software including;
- Donor (especially USAID) reporting particularities,
- Development of both program and organization financial statements,
- Budgets, and cash flow statements,
- Integration and/or conflict with Ukrainian accounting or tax requirements

During the reporting period UCIPR staff also received consultations from USAID OFM and Kreston audit and consultancy firm on the development/amendments of certain policies and procedures following NUPAS and audit recommendations. Cooperation with Kreston was initiated by the Financial Management Capacity Development Initiative in Ukraine (FMCDI) for improvement of UCIPR organizational capacity. The parties signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

Furthermore, the UCIPR staff improved its gender awareness and participated in gender, financial management and internal control system trainings. These trainings would be very useful for the team to fulfill NUPAS recommendations and USAID requirements.

With the cooperation with Kreston, UCIPR developed amendments to the Procurement and HR Manuals and it started drafting of the new Financial Management Manual.

As a result of improvement of the finance office operation, it was decided to announce competition for the selection of the new UCIPR Finance Director. Selection Committee was formed from the UCIPR representatives, Ms. Olha Trufanova (FMCDI) and Mr. Svyatoslav Yefremov (Kreston). Based on the competitive selection process, Mr. Oleh Hrabar was hired as a UCIPR Finance Director on April 14, 2015. Besides that, UCIPR is considering the involvement of external finance controller (for the transition period), which will be responsible for adherence of the high standards of the finance management of Organization.

In addition, on January 2015, the UCIPR team developed UCIPR Strategic Plan for 2015-2017 which is under discussion of the Board.

UCIPR Internship program

Since October 2014, UCIPR developed the UCIPR's two-month internship program and selected three interns (Tetyana Kirilova, Olena Kalugina and Yuliya Lytvynenko) on the competitive basis. After they received the training, they had two months internship with UCIPR. The interns were actively involved in all UCIPR activities, namely preparation of the key advocacy activities, collection of information during monitoring process. During the internship program they improved their skills and competencies in the field of advocacy campaigns, communicating with public authorities and monitoring of legislation implementation. At the end of the program, interns evaluated the program and provided recommendations for future internships.

Expected result 3.2: UCIPR's technical capacity improved – legal analysis and expertise

Use of English language resources in UCIPR's expertise

During the reporting period, the UCIPR team attended the series of seminars and master classes in analysis of public policy (trainer Mr. Roman Kobets) organized under project "Initiatives for development of Ukrainian think tanks" by the International Renaissance Foundation with the

financial support of SIDA and TTF. The seminars included such issues as public policy analysis, problem analysis, and policy development, evaluation of public policy stakeholders' analysis and planning of advocacy campaign.

Expected result 3.3: UCIPR's capacity to influence a broad community of stakeholders increased – government, NGOs, citizens and the international organizations

“Citizen in Action” Project webpage

In January 2015, UCIPR launched the project webpage on the UCIPR website and it constantly publishes project news at the project webpage and the UCIPR Facebook page.

UCIPR's policy updates

In March 2015, the UCIPR team developed and issued first policy updates in Ukrainian which was distributed among partners, civic activists, experts, public authority representatives etc. The policy updates contained information on the changes into legislative environment for CSOs and on important events.

First edition of Policy updates

V. Mandatory Factors

A. Gender

During six months of the project implementation, UCIPR tried to attract equal number of women and men to its trainings and activities. However, its program activities are not planned for gender equality, UCIPR supports Ukrainian coalitions or networks dealing with gender inequality in the application of government policies and practices. It incorporated gender in all trainings to increase awareness of gender gaps what will help to facilitate inclusion of women in formal decision-making processes in civil society work. Moreover, conducting legislative and policy analysis, drafting and monitoring, UCIPR performed with a gender lens. All advocacy initiatives considered gender

differences and perspectives from the outset in order to effectively represent all Ukrainians and their interests.

UCIPR also worked closely with other activities implemented under the Civic Oversight Project that focus specifically on the advocacy and monitoring initiatives and CSO organizational capacity building in order to strengthen women's participation in civil society activism and engagement.

B. People with Disabilities

During the reporting period, UCIPR provided consultations to DPOs and CSOs engaged in disability issues regarding legislative and policy changes. It tried to include DPOs and CSOs in their networks and partnerships at the national and local levels. UCIPR also works closely with other Civic Oversight Project activities that assist in advocacy and monitoring initiatives as well as provide institutional and management capacity-building support to DPOs and CSOs engaged in disability programming. UCIPR looks for synergies between this program and other USG-supported initiatives, and present additional areas for support to the issue of disability in civil society strengthening.

C. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community

UCIPR assisted organizations focused on LGBT issues, along with other organizations, to support a legislative framework that protects and supports civil society. UCIPR worked closely with other activities implemented under the Civic Oversight Project that focus specifically on the advocacy and monitoring initiatives and CSO organizational capacity building in order to support organizations representing underserved populations. UCIPR provided consultations regarding CSO regulation to civil society organizations, including those that engage on LGBT issues.

D. Sustainability

In order to achieve sustainability of the project, the program team prepared Initial implementation Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, built relationship with the Ministry of Justice as key Beneficiary and register project with the Ministry of Economy. It started all activities, which will be continued in the second half of the year.

VI. Coordination

All activities of six month activities were implemented in close collaboration with other Mission activities and projects. For instance, the Ukraine Civil Society Capacity Building activity provided knowledge and skills on various fields (e.g. advocacy and communication, international Law and best practices). Joint efforts of UCIPR and other USAID projects to raise media and public awareness of CSO legislative activities, including through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), was very important (ISAR). Other programs included the following partners:

- The USAID/Strengthening Civil Society in Ukraine (also known as Ukraine National Initiative to Enhance Reform – UNITER);
- The USAID/Ukraine Financial Management Capacity Development Initiative;
- The USAID/Ukraine local governance programs, including efforts to increase levels of citizen participation and engagement with local officials;
- The USAID/Ukraine rule of Law program dealing with administrative Law reform, especially given the role of administrative courts as the nexus for resolving disputes between

citizens and government;

- The USAID/Ukraine Responsible Accountable Democratic Assembly (RADA) program to spur civil society participation in legislative drafting and to monitor legislation implementation
- ISAR/Ednannia.

The activity also worked in close collaboration with non-US government donors, including the International Renaissance Foundation, UNDP, Swedish, Canadian and other Embassies, the EU Delegation and EU projects implemented in Ukraine. Regular donor coordination helped to better shape legislative agenda and allowed for more effective use of resources.