



RESPOND



INNOVATING FOR IMPACT:

Stories of Social Enterprise in Ukraine

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In Ukraine, Pact is piloting a new capacity development approach: social enterprise strengthening. As donor funding for middle income countries like Ukraine falls, Ukrainian civil society is looking for creative ways to build a resourcing strategy that will be sustainable over the long-term. Some organizations are creating social enterprises, businesses with a double bottom line that will help them increase their social impact, as well as generate profits to support their organization's sustainability.

In summer 2015, USAID, concerned about the potential drop off in funding for Ukrainian HIV/AIDS service providers, approached RESPOND to discuss a pilot to support NGOs to create new revenue-generating businesses or grow their already established businesses. A pilot initiative working with seven organizations was launched in Fall 2015. Pact is working with these organizations to develop and strengthen their social enterprises through trainings, mentoring opportunities, an international exchange, and connection to investment opportunities.



CHERKASY REGIONAL BRANCH OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

Nataliya Popelniukh, Case-Manager at Studio of Opportunities, counseling Iryna

Olena Fridrikh, Coordinator at the Drop-In Center



Over the past 13 years, the Cherkasy Regional Branch of the All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV has worked to improve the quality of life of HIV-affected people through treatment, diagnosis and social support services. In 2014, the organization was presented with the Red Ribbon Award, a prestigious prize honoring the contributions of community-based organizations in combatting the HIV epidemic.

Olena Fridrikh, coordinator of the Network-run Drop-In Center for Women, says about the Network's services for women with children affected by HIV: "About three years ago, we opened a drop-in center for HIV-positive women with nowhere else to turn. They can stay here with their small children for half a year before they are ready to live on their own."

Not only do these women have HIV, but they experience other difficult life circumstances and stress factors including social isolation, job loss, domestic violence and homelessness. Along with support and care, these women need to be reintegrated into society.

"Opening a social venture to provide them with the opportunity to prepare themselves for independent life sounded like a reasonable solution," says Fridrikh. "We considered many options for a social enterprise and finally selected

the idea to start a cleaning agency. This type of service doesn't require specific certifications or background, yet women can acquire social and communication skills as well as work experience."

The cleaning agency will provide women with the means for living and will help generate revenue for the Network to sustain programs that empower women to shape their

own lives. Studio of Opportunities is one such program recently piloted by the Network under Pact's RESPOND project. This three-month program addresses women's needs to take control of their lives, equips them with skills to be able to care for themselves and their families, and helps them to find jobs or start businesses.

Iryna, a recent Studio of Opportunities graduate, didn't have high expectations when she enrolled. She was fixated on her HIV diagnosis and believed her life was over. Iryna's husband wasn't supportive and her 5-year-old daughter was on the edge of neglect.

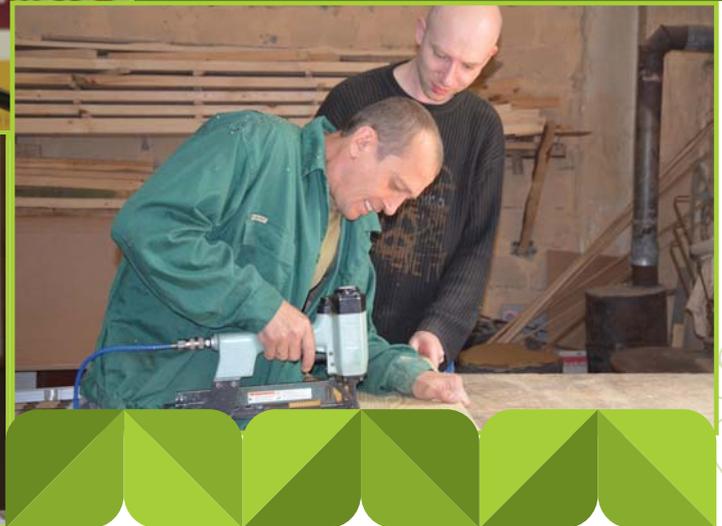
"I haven't changed my HIV status, but I have changed my attitude," Iryna says now. "I have learned to love life and to love my daughter.

I want to continue changing my life the way I see it. I want to become a tailor and open my own dressmaker's shop. It isn't my dream, it's my plan."

“We considered many options for a social enterprise and finally selected the idea to start a cleaning agency. This type of service doesn't require specific certifications or background, yet women can acquire social and communication skills as well as work experience.”

CHERKASY NGO FROM HEART TO HEART

- ◀ Natalya Nesvat, Chairwoman at From Heart to Heart
- ◀ Yelena, Social Worker at the shelter
- ▼ Mykhailo and Roman, Workers at the furniture-making social venture



Since 2013, Yelena, 65, has been working and residing at the Shelter for Homeless opened by the Charitable Organization From Heart to Heart, in Cherkasy City.

“I collect personal data from the questioners filled out by the shelter newcomers,” Yelena says. “I then explain the in-house rules and ask them to sign an agreement. If they sign the agreement, they get a medical check-up and come to me for further conversation about what can be done in each particular case.”

Yelena works as a peer case manager at the shelter. When her husband died 3 years ago, she lost her apartment as well as her identity documents. As she was roaming the streets, she noticed an ad hanging on a street lamp post. It was the address of the shelter.

“I was in despair and couldn’t believe my eyes. I always tell my story to my clients and say that there’s always a way out!” she says.

“The shelter opened in 2011. Since then, it has provided accommodation, food and other basic needs,” says Natalya Nesvat, Chairwoman of From Heart to Heart. “The shelter’s capacity has been expanded. Today it is able to house up to 40 people and serves as a transition home.”

The organization aimed to give its clients something more than just a shelter and food. The idea of launching a social enterprise was the best way to teach homeless people life and job skills.

“We opened a small furniture-making and sewing business,” explains Nesvat. “It is not a fully self-sustained company yet. It makes just enough money to buy supplies and pay some salaries. The rest of the funding comes from a variety of sources, but we would like to make it a successful, independent, revenue-generating venture.”

The organization participated in entrepreneurial and managerial skills development workshops under the social entrepreneurship initiative undertaken by the USAID RESPOND project implemented by Pact.

“Right after the first workshop the team had a clear plan for the venture development,” Nesvat says. “Later, participating in the

Community of Practice meeting, I realized that marketing is an indispensable part for the sustainability and growth of any enterprise.”

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**DNIPROPETROVSK
REGIONAL BRANCH
OF ALL-UKRAINIAN
NETWORK OF PEOPLE
LIVING WITH HIV ***



In her late 30s, Olha is a self-employed beginner potter. She dreamed up the idea of opening a pottery studio last year when she attended Studio of Opportunities, a livelihood program for women affected by HIV. In Dnipro, the program was piloted by the local branch of the All-Ukrainian Charitable Organization “Network of People Living with HIV” with a grant from the USAID RESPOND project, which is implemented by Pact. Studio of Opportunities is integrated with Patient School Program designed improve adherence to antiretroviral therapy.

Donations raised by the Network helped Olha buy an electric wheel as well as a kiln to bake her pottery. Since 2013, Pact has been providing technical assistance to the Network, building its organizational capacity. Pact has helped to improve the Network’s fundraising strategies, including with a pilot social entrepreneurship initiative to diversify its funding streams.

Olha explains that in addition to providing pottery lessons and equipment, Studio of Opportunities taught her that only she could decide what she wanted to be in life.

“I was going through a lot of stress then,” she says. “I didn’t have a job. I stayed with my husband and his parents. He was a sole earner for the family. I was looking after our son and my husband’s grandparents. No

matter how hard I tried, there was more and more criticism, putdowns and anger in our relationship.”

Olha couldn’t put up any longer with the way things stood. “Although Vladimir [Olha’s husband] wasn’t supportive of my decision to start my own business, I did it,” she says.

With the Network, she is starting a pottery studio for children whose parents cannot afford to pay for pottery classes. It will be a social enterprise.

“Clay can be used in so many different ways,” she says. “I want others to enjoy this opportunity the way I do.”

In May 2016, at a Community of Practice meeting organized by RESPOND to foster social entrepreneurship, Olha presented an idea for the new venture.

*Read Olha's full story at <http://respond.org.ua/eng/story/569>

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KRYVVI RIH CITY BRANCH OF ALL-UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

- ◀ Darya Melnik, Children's Psychologist, working with children attending the Network's Center
- ◀ Ella Sokolyuk, Executive Director at the Network branch
- ▼ Natalya, Social Worker at the Network's Center for Children



Natalya, 40, is a social worker at the Kryvyi Rih Branch of the All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV (the Network). A mother of four, she first came here when she discovered that both she and her 1-year-old son Sasha had HIV. She was looking for someone to understand her – other moms with HIV-positive children.

At the Network's Center for Children Affected by HIV, "I found people I could talk to," Natalya says. "I met other parents and their children. Psychologists and social workers did a great job by helping me deal with my fears and concerns. With time, I noticed that helping others made me feel better."

Natalya's kids became clients of the Center for Children Affected by HIV. Its staff was always there to help parents like Natalya tackle problems such as status acceptance and disclosure, treatment adherence, interpersonal relations and health problems.

"Sasha is 14 now. He says that when he grows up, he will have a family and children," Natalya says. "Such moments make me so happy and give me hope that he'll be fine."

The Center opened in 2005 and since then, several generation of kids have graduated. The team, including Natalya, gained knowledge and practical skills to provide psycho-social support to pregnant women, small children, teenagers and their parents. The center estab-

lished partnerships with the local government, health-care facilities and public and private organizations.

"We found out that mothers who were the clients of the center shared their experience of going to the center with their friends and neighbors," says Ella Sokolyuk, Executive Director of the Kryvyi Rih Branch of the PLHIV Network. "Mothers whose children were not affected by HIV were coming over to ask about child development services for their children. They were even willing to pay."

The center team didn't delay the launch of a two-month educational program for preschoolers. It turned out to be very successful. The services were just as good or even better than those of for-profit providers.

With some essential services for children at risk of ending due to funding cuts by international donors, the idea of piloting a fee-for-service approach was very timely. So was technical assistance the Network received from the USAID RESPOND project under its Social Entrepreneurship initiative. Thanks to RESPOND, the Network staff participated in trainings on business model validation and business plan development and formulated financial, marketing and PR strategies for their social enterprise.

"Donors' grants are crucial for piloting new programs," says Sokolyuk, "but once they are on the go, we need to find ways to keep them running."

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KYIV CITY BRANCH OF ALL-UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

Olena, Social Worker

Lada Bulakh, Director at the Network branch

Lada Bulakh and Ruslana Natsyk at Business Model Validation Training



Having spent several years in prison Lena did not want to return to her hometown. She feared that in the city of Kryvyi Rih she would meet her old friends and would go back to drugs. This was not at all part of her plan. She went straight to Kyiv to find a job and to get treatment for HIV. She contracted the disease in the 1990s when HIV was a death sentence. Behind bars, Lena learned a lot about HIV from the All-Ukrainian Network of People living with HIV (the Network). She learned about ARV-therapy too, a treatment that stops the progress of the disease. She knew that if something went wrong, she could always turn to the people from the Network.

That's what she did after some unsuccessful attempts to access a TB clinic. She was diagnosed with TB and now needed treatment for TB and HIV. The Network optimally engaged Lena in care and when she got better, she volunteered as a social worker at the Network. Having received additional training Lena got a job as a social worker at the community center for families affected by HIV.

"I know that the Network is a very strong organization. These people once helped me, and now I am trying to help other people. That is why I want to live a long and full-fledged life," said Lena.

The scope of services offered by the Kyiv city branch of the PLHIV Network is very broad and includes social support to people living with HIV, inmates in correctional facilities, and people with TB, social and legal support to internally displaced people affected by HIV,

and other services. The organization advocates for the rights of people living with HIV, fights stigma and discrimination and engages people in HIV care across the treatment cascade.

The Network has developed expertise in multiple aspects of HIV care. "We would like to be paid for some of our services, such as home care, to reduce donor dependency while sustaining the existing services," explains Lada Bulakh, Executive Director of the Kyiv City Branch of the PLHIV Network. "When we learned about Pact's Social Entrepreneurship initiative, we decided to put the idea of paid home care on hold and to start with something small and simple."

One of the team's social workers proposed making soap as she knew how to make hand-made soap. The team members liked the idea. It didn't require expensive ingredients, premises, training or licensing fee. It could be produced by the members of the Network team as well as by their clients.

"People involved in the social venture will decide how to spend the revenue. They may want to spend it on the needs of the shelter for victims of domestic violence, or they might decide to buy medications for the City AIDS Center. In any case, the decision should come from the people who are making the money. They should be motivated by the opportunity to do good deeds," said Lada.

LVIV REGIONAL BRANCH OF ALL-UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

- ◀ Dmytro Tyhach, Director at the Network branch
- ◀ Vasyl Rudan, External Communications Specialist at the Network branch, and Alex Adel, Sr. Technical Specialist, Capacity Development, Pact, Washington D.C.
- ▼ Zoryana Zamorylo, Social Worker at the Network branch



The Lviv Branch of the All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV (the Lviv Network) came up with the idea of starting a social enterprise after some grants ended and essential support for people living with HIV was under threat of disappearing.

The team explored several options before deciding on an agricultural business because it wouldn't require a lot of startup resources. They settled on growing garlic – a high-margin product in consistent demand.

The Lviv Network is currently looking for suitable fields and planning their first sowing for the upcoming fall.

The garlic farm will also provide job opportunities for ex-convicts and other people who experience difficulties trying to re-enter society. In addition to care, support and treatment, they will obtain skills vital to anyone making a new start.

“We want to reduce the risks of insufficient funding to meet our clients' needs by generating revenue to cover some services that are now being financed by donors,” explains Dmytro Tyhach, Director of the Lviv Network. “In this sense, social entrepreneurship means more freedom for us as an organization and more security for the clients.”

The Lviv Network provides a wide range of services for people living with HIV. Zoryana, one of the Network's

social workers, helps clients cope with challenges they face every day – from linking them to care and treatment to keeping them in care.

One of Zoryana's clients, Roman, had to move to Lviv from Luhansk, where he couldn't continue treatment because of the shortage of antiretroviral therapy in conflict-affected areas no longer controlled by Ukraine. Unlike many internally displaced people, Roman was able to find a job and to come to the local AIDS Center with the intention of resuming his treatment. Zoryana introduced Roman to his doctor and helped him to undergo a medical examination and take blood tests. Some of these services were in different parts of the city, so Zoryana accompanied Roman, as he was new to Lviv. Soon, the life-saving therapy was prescribed.

A critical moment came when Roman took a full day off work to do a regular checkup and receive a second supply of ART. His doctor asked him to come another day and would not listen to Roman's plea to make a prescription the same day.

“I was very upset about the way the doctor treated me,” Roman says. “I wanted to quit my treatment because I couldn't lose my job. I am very grateful to my social worker who helped me set my priorities right and made me go to another doctor. Now I know, even in the most dismal circumstances, I can rely on the Network.”

“We want to reduce the risks of insufficient funding to meet our clients' needs... In this sense, social entrepreneurship means more freedom for us as an organization and more security for the clients.”

MYKOLAYIV NGO PENITENTIARY INITIATIVE

- ▶ Business Model Validation Training
- ▶ Serhiy, Client of Penitentiary Initiative NGO
- ▼ Iryna Zhevnerova, Member of Penitentiary Initiative's board



35-year-old Serhiy was released from prison three months ago. Long before that, he had been enrolled in a tuberculosis (TB) care and support program implemented by the Mykolayiv regional NGO Penitentiary Initiative. On the outside, Serhiy continued staying in touch with his social workers.

“I had no one who could visit me in prison or who would bring me food and other stuff,” he says. “These people (social workers) helped me with my health problems, with legal advice, and even helped me to find a job. I’m on initial probation at the shipyard. I really want to keep this job. I feel and my doctor says that my health has improved too.”

Psychologists with Penitentiary Initiative were among the first to promote adherence to medical treatment for prisoners living with HIV and TB. The organization’s other areas of focus include prevention of HIV, STIs, and TB; care and support for HIV-affected people inside correctional facilities and detention centers in the Mykolayiv region; and post-release support to people re-entering society.

Iryna Mospan works as a social worker and a psychologist at one of the area’s few detention centers for women.

“I remember when there were two pregnant women among the detainees. They both delivered their babies

almost at the same time and there were no cribs for the babies, not to mention diapers, formula and other baby necessities,” says Mospan. “The facility administration approached us to get help for the babies.”

It took the NGO less than two days to get everything settled with the newborn boys, and it was then that the NGO team thought about having extra resources available for unforeseen situations like this. Most services provided by the organization had been funded by grants, but grants could not cover expenses such as personal hygiene items, transportation, shelter, food and other basic needs. They were primarily funded through private donations, but the team was looking for alternative ways of funding, and that is when the idea of a social enterprise was born.

“We have more than 10 years’ experience and skills in organizing events like trainings, conferences and seminars. We can provide event management services and logistical and technical support to other NGOs and self-employed trainers,” says Iryna Zhevnerova, a member of Penitentiary Initiative’s board. “Social enterprise is more than just diversification of funding. It is a diversification of the services we provide to our clients. As we proceeded with this project, it challenged us to think outside the box and we decided to pitch our services to customers outside the domain of HIV care.”

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