



CAPACITY-STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVES IN UKRAINE: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

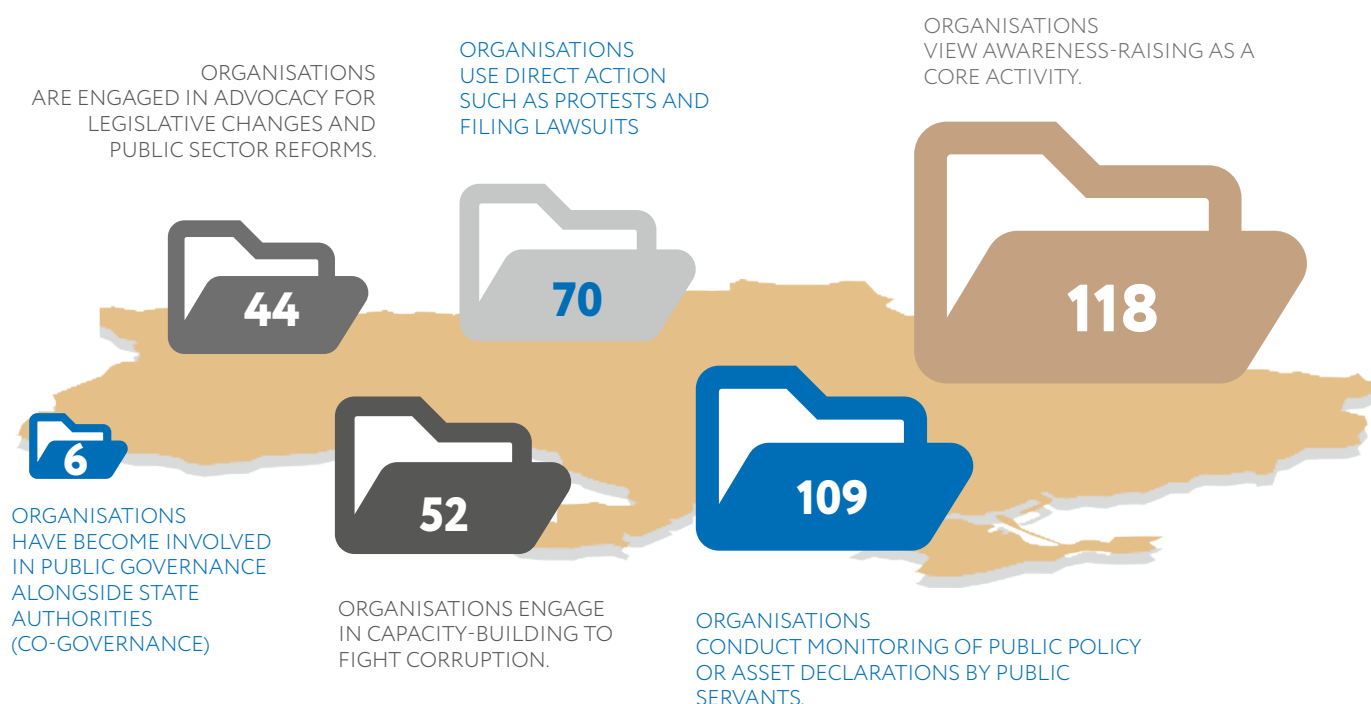
One of the main priorities for the international assistance programmes focusing on anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine, is the support of such reforms at the regional and local levels. The regional and local non-governmental organisations are considered as the key actors of this process. In the meantime, the donors face certain challenges with regard to the work in the regions. These challenges are caused by low professional and institutional capacities of a significant number of such NGOs. Every donor programme or organisation looks for its own working methods as well as for the ways to overcome the challenges of local level work. Consequently, the development of the recommendations for donor programmes and organisations focusing on the implementation of anti-corruption projects in Ukraine is crucial on the current stage.

The goal of the document is to provide the donor community with the recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the donors' cooperation with the non-governmental organisations of regional and local levels.

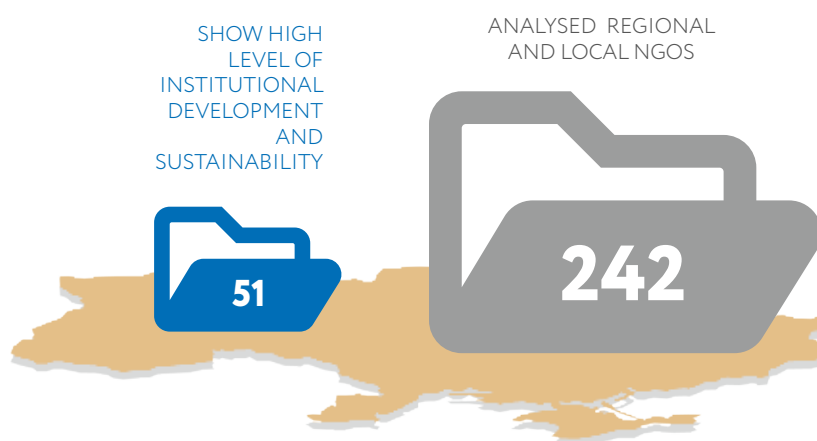


FINDINGS

1. A review of empirical studies suggests that the activities of anti-corruption civil society organisations in regional and local level fall under six categories: monitoring and reporting, awareness-raising, advocacy, direct action, capacity building, and co-governance. The graph below shows which of these types of activities are most common among anti-corruption organisations in the regions of Ukraine. Most organizations are involved in more than one type of activity.

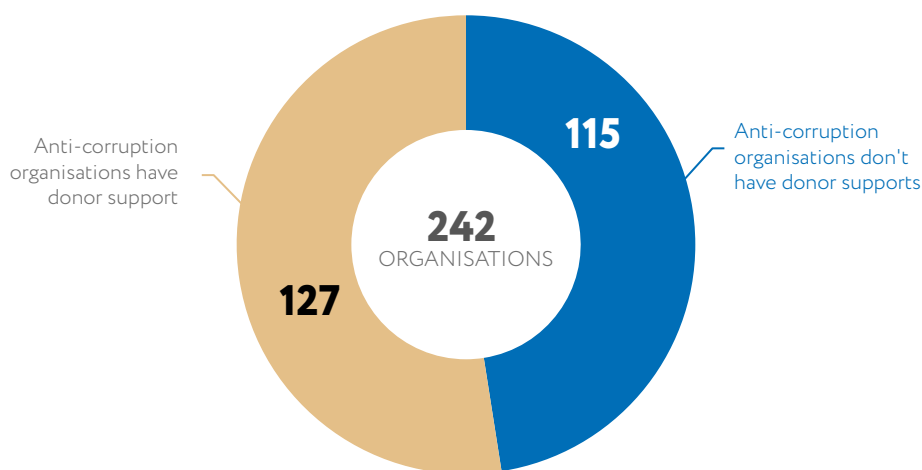


2. Research of regional and local anti-corruption organisations revealed low organisational capacities and financial sustainability of the majority of such NGOs.



Our respondents gave the following principal reasons for such situation:

- (1) lack of fundraising skills;
- (2) lack of readiness of average individuals to make money contributions for the operation of anti-corruption NGOs;
- (3) impossibility to accept contributions from the big business representatives because of the risks to be accused of advocating their interests;
- (4) lack of competences for preparing grant applications;
- (5) low organisational development of local organisations caused by the lack of readiness of the donor programmes to administer the organisations' project activities as well as the lack of possibilities to support the institutional development.



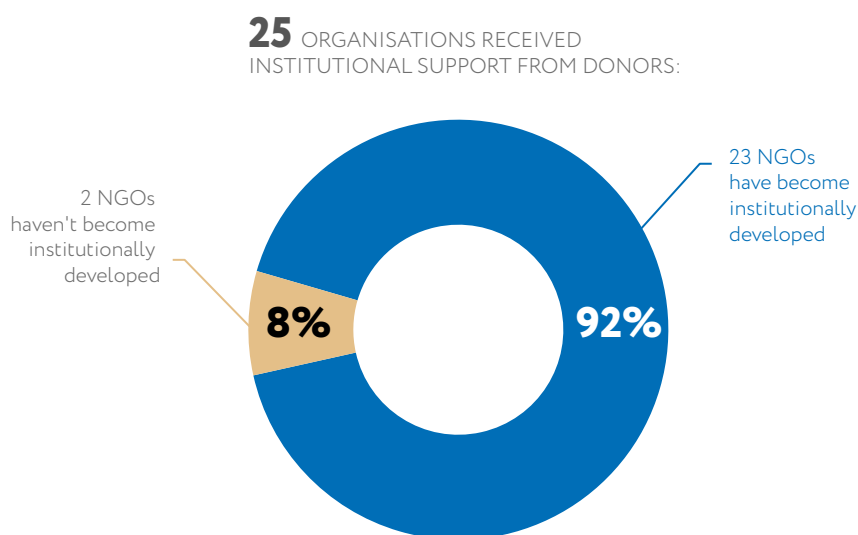
Nevertheless, this does not mean that the organisations who have low level of institutional development and professional capacities are not effective in their activities. Numerous organisations have their success stories of corruption prevention and actively contribute to the implementation of anti-corruption reforms at the regional and local levels, despite their low organisational development and absence of any financial donor support (115 out of 242 anti-corruption organisations operate using the members' contributions or donations of the local community representatives,

mainly entrepreneurs). However, the sustainability of the operation of such organisations is undermined by their low institutional development. What is more, due to this factor such organisations cannot operate in a systematic manner, turning into professional non-governmental organisations capable of engaging professionals and consistently working to eliminate the causes for the corruption practices instead of fighting their consequences, being stakeholders respected enough to provide the local authorities with recommendations the latter will follow.

3. It is worth noting that the organisations that have high organisational development level do not consider insufficient financing as a principal challenge.

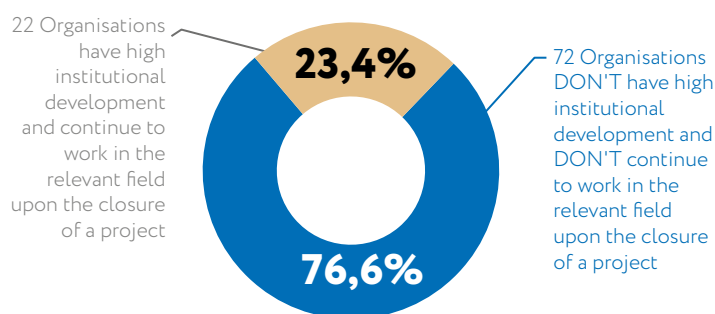
4. The majority of donors support project activities of regional and local anti-corruption organisations. However, as the results of our research show, it is exactly the institutional support that proved to be effective.

Thus, the institutional support effectively enables the organisations to grow professionally and helps to establish systematic operation.

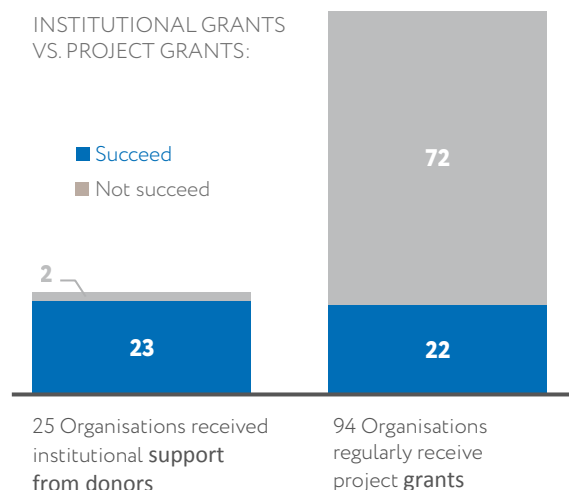


The situation when the donors' support is directed to a greater extent to the implementation of short-term projects of the regional level, despite the success of such projects, very often results in the following. A group of anti-corruption activists is established in the regions; they switch from one organisation to another depending on which one of them has the funds to implement a particular project. In the meantime, neither quantity nor quality of the regional/local anti-corruption NGOs and activists is strengthened; there is also no increase in the anti-corruption activities' of the organisations and in their impact on the advancement of anti-corruption reforms at the local level.

94 ORGANISATIONS REGULARLY RECEIVE PROJECT GRANTS:



INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS VS. PROJECT GRANTS:



5. In the course of this research, we have revealed a number of factors resulting in the specificities of corruption in a given region / city.

6. The underlying causes of corruption quite often lie in the lacunae or collisions in the legislation and the relevant problems can only be solved by amending the laws of Ukraine.

7. Establishing formal or informal coalitions at the local level always has positive effect for the impact on the corruption prevention and implementation of anti-corruption reforms.

8. Our research has also confirmed the information on the increase of the number of attacks against anti-corruption activists, destruction of their property and other manifestations of persecution of active representatives of the anti-corruption organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To include into the programmes aimed at supporting civil society in promoting anti-corruption reforms a component of institutional support of anti-corruption organisations of local and regional level of low organisational development level but who nevertheless have their success stories and development potential.
2. To conduct field research before setting priorities for the programmes of anti-corruption focus; this would help to understand the local context and the demand for particular anti-corruption measures for the region / city.
3. To have in mind the local context of each particular city or region when setting the support priorities. It is important to take into account the specificities of corruption in each particular region/city and to be guided, first of all, by the demand of local NGOs and initiatives. They have better understanding of the activities that need support for the successful implementation and sustainability of anti-corruption reforms in their respective region / city.
4. To organise seminars and webinars on grant applications preparation for regional and local NGOs.
5. To finance project activities of local organisations with low institutional development through regional organisations with high institutional and professional capacities. To encourage building of partnerships between such organisations.
6. **To ensure that the projects envisaging cooperation between local and national non-governmental organisations comprise the following components:**
 - (a) direct financing of the implementation of project activities to be provided to the local organisations;
 - (b) mentor support from the partner organisation of the national level concerning the administration of such projects.
7. To support institutional development of local anti-corruption coalitions.
8. To support project activities envisaging engagement of the representatives of local authorities and NGOs on the basis of equal partnership.
9. To finance the projects envisaging development of professional capacities of local non-governmental organisations, in particular, training on fundraising, preparation of analytics and their further communication, advocacy campaigning on regional and local level, personal security etc.