



Stories of change

*Women of Ukraine:
Heard, Capable, Resilient* project

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CRSV	conflict-related sexual violence
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GBV	gender-based violence
GoC	Government of Canada
Hub	Interregional Hub for capacity building of local women's rights organizations
IDPs	internally displaced persons
INGO	international non-governmental organization
ITOCA	integrated technical and organizational capacity assessment
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	non-governmental organization
OGIC	Oleksandriya Gender Information Center
Superpower	Superpower for Local Women's Rights Organizations
UN	United Nations
WoU	Women of Ukraine: Heard, Capable, Resilient project
WRO	women's rights organizations

Introduction

The five-year Women of Ukraine: Heard, Capable, Resilient (2019-2024) project was implemented in Ukraine by Pact with financial support from the Government of Canada (GoC).

The project’s aim was to increase the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls and the advancement of gender equality in Ukraine through:

- improved management and sustainability of local women’s rights organizations (WROs), particularly those representing vulnerable and marginalized women and girls;
- enhanced performance of WROs’ programming and advocacy to advance gender equality; and
- increased effectiveness of national and subnational women’s rights platforms, networks, and alliances to affect gender-sensitive policy change and policy implementation.

To achieve this goal, Pact used a cascade approach to strengthen the capacity of five¹ experienced WROs which served as Interregional Hubs (Hubs) for capacity building of local WROs. Hubs were trained on methodologies and tools for capacity building, human-centered design, collective impact, and more. The Hubs delivered capacity development services and provided mentoring support to the local WROs. Over the project period, more than 80 women’s organizations participated in the project’s signature Superpower for Local Women’s Rights Organizations (or, as the participants called it, the Superpower network). This collection of stories from Superpower members, organized by regional cluster (Eastern, Western, Central, Southern) captures change resulting from their participation in the project.

Women of Ukraine partner WROs, as of December 31, 2023



¹ As of December 31, 2023, there were four Hubs.



In addition to cascaded capacity development support, the *Women of Ukraine: Heard, Capable, Resilient (WoU)* project expanded access to funding for the local WROs. Pact issued 70 grants to local WROs to support advocacy campaigns for greater access to services, promotion of gender equality, and protection of women's and girls' rights.



Eastern Cluster

The Eastern Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of local WROs is the *Center for Gender Culture WRO*. As of December 31, 2023, the Eastern Cluster included the following local WROs:

- *Charitable Organization 'Charity Fund Social Health' WRO;*
- *Vzayemodiya WRO;*
- *Gender Club Dnipro WRO;*
- *Association of Roma Women 'Voice of Romni' WRO;*
- *Woman of the Future WRO;*
- *Women's Human Rights Group WRO;*
- *Women's Hundred WRO;*
- *Shchastya Studio East Ukrainian support center for women WRO;*
- *Motivational Circle WRO;*
- *Pravopolis WRO;*
- *Association 'Smarta' WRO;*
- *Studio of public women's initiatives WRO;*
- *Eastern Hope WRO;*
- *Grun Community Development Fund WRO;*
- *Kharkiv Volunteer Center WRO;*
- *Development Center 'Women's World' WRO;*
- *Shyroke Kolo WRO.*

A story of becoming a powerful provider of capacity development from *Center for Gender Culture WRO* in Kharkiv, Eastern Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of local WROs

Kharkiv *Center for Gender Culture WRO* created the first and only Women's and Gender History Museum in Ukraine in 2009, bringing visibility to women's history and contemporary issues (<https://gendermuseum.com/>).

"When we heard that Pact is implementing a project aimed at supporting the women's movement, we immediately understood that we should join it," commented Tetiana Isaieva, the head of the WRO and Director of the Women's and Gender History Museum and Tetiana Chernetska, Project Manager of the Center and Coordinator of the Eastern Hub.

The *Center for Gender Culture* has become a powerful hub for building the capacity of local WROs. It has brought together 18 organizations from Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions. Over three years of collaboration, the *Center* has trained, supported, developed, and empowered WROs, uniting them into an informal network, the Eastern Cluster, for mutual development and strengthening. In doing so, the *Center* has strengthened the Ukrainian women's movement, making it powerful and influential.



Center for Gender Culture team.



Women's and Gender History Museum in Kharkiv. June 2021.



Launching the Hub Network. February 2020.

Pivoting during a full-scale war



“The capacity development of an organization is the foundation that sustains the organization during a storm,” attests Tetiana Chernetska.

Since the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, most WROs in the Eastern Cluster pivoted their daily operations to begin providing humanitarian, psychological, and legal assistance to women and families affected by the war. While the fundamental shift to provide humanitarian support was seen across Ukraine, given their geographic location, many of the organizations in the Eastern Cluster were forced to relocate as they were on the front line themselves.

In the first months of the war, organizational development took a back seat to emerging urgent needs. However, Hub members quickly realized that to work effectively in wartime conditions, they needed to strengthen the capacity of their own organizations, ensuring their viability and quality of service delivery. Clear activity strategies, processes and management, and a well-developed support system for personnel, are among the keys to the resilience of these organizations continuing to provide services during the war.



Organizations of the Eastern Cluster. Training for Gender Advisors. October 2023.

Additionally, mutual support within the *Superpower for Local Women’s Rights Organizations* program helped organizations to stay together and to work in synergy.



“We are proud that, over three years, we have managed to create a network of WROs in Eastern Ukraine that support each other, implement joint projects, exchange experiences, and become strong and capable. Being a Hub for us means creating an environment for the development of WROs, making the women’s movement more powerful and visible, and overall, being an influential player in the development of civil society in Ukraine,” notes Tetiana Chernetska.

Capacity Strengthening

Through its partnership with Pact, the *Center for Gender Culture* increased their own capacity. Tetiana Chernetska says, “*Pact brought rationality and systematicity to the work of the Center for Gender Culture. We strengthened our own capacity for, and developed clear procedures on, financial management and procurement, and have planned external financial audits. In 2021, the Hub developed the organization’s first strategic plan. But even after the start of full-scale war, the organization’s priorities did not change, indicating the quality of the planning process.*”



CoP for Hubs. March 2023.

During its participation in the *WoU* project, the *Center for Gender Culture* began paying more attention to monitoring and evaluation of activities and developed a plan for monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan with tools provided by Pact. Evidence of the strengthening of the organization can be seen in its successful coordination of the network of WROs in the project and Kharkiv Region 1325 Coalition on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women. Peace. Security”.



“*Our participation in the Women of Ukraine project has allowed us to reach a new level of development. Our organization has become a place of strength and support for women’s organizations. In general, Pact encourages growth. We have gained new strong partners, expanded the geography of activities, acquired new knowledge in the field of capacity building and development, and seen new perspectives for our own progress,*” says Tetiana Chernetska.

A story of persistence from Association ‘Smarta’ WRO

With the slogan *If you want order in the house, choose women in power!* Liliia Kislitsyna, a former journalist, media specialist, and marketing director, won local elections in 2015, becoming a deputy of the Kramatorsk City Council. Liliia set herself the goal of opening a modern perinatal center in the city, as there was no specialized medical facility for pregnant women and newborns in the region after the occupation of Donetsk city in 2014.

Liliia’s initiative was not supported by the deputies for a long time, so she rallied female activists and others who advocated together for the opening of the medical facility. Finally, after two years, the regional perinatal center was opened, and a group of



Team of *Smarta* WRO.

activists led by Liliia founded *Smarta* WRO. “We practically started with a specific matter, which we successfully brought to an end and wanted to continue implementing socially significant initiatives,” explains Liliia.

Start with a project-based approach

In its early years, *Smarta* conducted training sessions on “Lessons of Democracy” for public activists and patriotic education events for youth. Gradually, the organization turned its focus to the protection of women’s rights in the medical and economic sectors. “Once we reviewed the statistics on the gender pay gap, it turned out to be 40% in our region! We were shocked and immediately wanted to address the issue,” expounds Liliia. When *Smarta* saw the call for applications from Pact within the Women of Ukraine project in 2020, it submitted a project application with the aim to advocate for the rights of working women or those seeking employment. They received a grant to fund this activity. “Previously, we implemented initiatives with the support of stakeholders, and this was our first grant project! But we worked very hard for it,” reports Liliia.

As a result of *Smarta*’s project funded by *WoU*, over a hundred women have completed training on protecting their labor rights. Moreover, a large-scale awareness campaign titled “Know Your Rights” was broadcast on local television and radio.



Press Conference for “Workspace Without Discrimination” as part of *Women of Ukraine* project, 2021.

In 2021, Pact supported *Smarta*’s other project aimed at fighting gender discrimination in the labor process, with a focus on advocacy. *Smarta* held several roundtables and training sessions with employers and representatives of local authorities, signed memoranda with partners to counter discrimination, and sent recommendations for the implementation of gender equality in labor relations not only to local authorities, but also to the relevant committees of the Verkhovna Rada, the Parliament of Ukraine. “With Pact’s support, we not only implemented advocacy project, but also scaled up our impact as a civil society organization,” concludes Liliia.

Strengthening from within



“We were a young organization, and we lacked systems knowledge tremendously. So, when the Superpower for Women’s Rights Organizations program was launched, *Smarta* was among the first to join it,” notes Liliia.

All the training sessions and seminars within the *Superpower* program proved to be highly relevant and beneficial for the organization. “I especially want to thank Pact and the coordinator of our Eastern hub, the Center for Gender Culture – Tetiana Chernetska, for the high level of facilitators and trainers,” adds Liliia. “Everything was so clear and understandable that we could immediately apply this knowledge in practice!”



Liliia (at left) with Pact Country Director Olena Gerasymova, and Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact in Ukraine, Tetiana Sakharuk, at the award ceremony for the winners of the “Partnership for Sustainable Development – 2021” competition. December 2021.



Training on Monitoring and Evaluation for representatives of the Eastern Cluster. January 2022.

During its participation in the *Superpower* program, *Smarta* developed its first policy – a non-discrimination policy that aligned with the overall vision of the organization, along with a code of conduct and a gender-oriented procurement policy. Moreover, the team worked carefully on a strategic development plan. “*Due to Superpower, we became stronger, more resilient organization, ready for large-scale projects, and new challenges,*” says Liliia.

Restoring resources

The full-scale war was *Smarta’s* most significant challenge. It relocated from the frontline city of Kramatorsk to Lviv. “*That’s when our connections with WROs, established through Superpower, proved invaluable,*” Liliia shares. “*We will always be grateful to the Women’s Perspective Center, the Western Hub of the Women of Ukraine project, and Lyubov Maksymovych for their assistance in relocating our organization!*” Initially, members of *Smarta*, displaced persons themselves, assisted the local shelter for internally displaced persons (IDPs) who were mostly women and children.

“*Our Eastern Hub started gathering us for online meetings, providing psychological support, and somehow we cheered up, pulled ourselves together and understood that we needed to work systematically, even during the war.*” In April 2022, *Smarta* implemented a project to provide first aid kits to internally displaced persons. As a result, 550 IDP families received first aid kits in Lviv, and the same number was delivered to communities who remained in the East. The organization also established a continuous supply of humanitarian aid to communities near the front line in the Donetsk region.



Members of *Smarta* after the relocation to Lviv. Year 2022.



“*I believe that it was the Superpower network that kept us afloat and restored the resources needed to move forward,*” says Liliia.

Network Building

Today, a strengthened *Smarta* implements several projects funded by national and international donors and Liliia actively represents Ukrainian women at international women's fora.

In 2023, *Smarta* initiated a coalition project within the *Women of Ukraine* framework along with two other organizations, both participants of the *Superpower* program. The project is aimed at localization of National Action Plan 1325 (in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution "Women, Peace, and Security") in five communities of Donetsk region. One of the interim results of the project is the establishment of a network of local coordinators who unite women in their communities and advocate for their interests at the local level. "Thanks to Pact, we have grown into a strong leading organization that can now build a network of women's organizations," says Liliia. "I am pleased that we decided to collaborate with Pact because it is a very wise organization that empowers women's organizations, thereby looking into the future."

A story on the transformation into an Influential WRO from Grun Community Development Fund WRO

The village of Grun in the Okhtyrka district of the Sumy region has a rich history. In the 17th century, it was the center of the Grun Hundred of the Zaporizhzhian Cossacks, and it is the birthplace of the famous humorist Ostap Vyshnia. Today, the village is primarily known for the impactful work of the local *Grun Community Development Fund WRO*.

From Books to People

"We all originated from the Central Library System," jokes Tetiana Sokol, Project Coordinator of the organization and head of the Grun Public Library, which became a community focal point after decentralization reforms (begun in 2014 giving additional power and resources to local authorities). Librarians from neighboring villages gathered at the Grun Public Library, organizing various cultural events, and assisting residents. Everything was done with their own efforts and modest income from rural librarians. "In 2018, with ten colleagues, we decided to formalize our work with a statute," says Grun Community Development Fund Chair, Liudmyla Savkova. "We thought that this would give us more opportunities for development." That is the organization was created. It aimed to protect rural residents' rights, with a focus on meeting the cultural and socio-economic needs of citizens.



Project Coordinator of the organization Tetiana Sokol (at left) together with Eastern Hub Project Coordinator from the Eastern Hub – the Center for Gender Culture – Tetiana Chernetska (second from right) and other representatives of the *Superpower* program during the workshop *Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment* by Pact. July 2023.

Success through Trial and Error

Grun Community Development Fund actively sought projects and funds to apply for. "We did everything reactively, as best as we could. We prepared project documentation, financial plans, and, of course,



made a lot of mistakes,” says Liudmyla. “We wrote about 50 applications, approached about a dozen institutions, but received only rejections. At some point, I almost wanted to give up, thinking that we wouldn’t become a capable and strong organization.”

In 2020, with little hope, they filled out an application to participate in the *WoU Superpower* program and were delighted when they received confirmation of their acceptance from Tetiana Chernetska.

“We noticed [Grun Community Development Fund] because they are a unique, rural organization, one of the few that cares for women in rural areas. We wanted to help them,” says Tetiana Chernetska, Coordinator of the Eastern Hub – the *Center for Gender Culture WRO*.

The Power of Mentorship

As part of the *Superpower* program, the organization received consultations and mentorship to formulate the mission and strategy of the organization, to find funding, and to develop project proposals.

Members of *Grun Community Development Fund* participated in training sessions and seminars on advocacy for WROs providing skills building on financial literacy, human-centered design, and more, conducted by Pact and the Eastern Hub. According to Liudmyla Savkova, they *“received tools and knowledge to promote their projects.”* A two-day training course on resource mobilization led by the



“We realized that we should not scatter our efforts and need to focus on one direction, which we defined as supporting rural women and women from vulnerable groups,” says Tetiana Sokol.

Eastern Hub proved to be particularly effective. Following the training, *Grun* rewrote an unsuccessful application to one of the international funds, and the rewritten version was selected for funding! This enabled the organization to provide significant support in the form of medicines and hygiene products to seriously ill women with part of the assistance handed over to the local hospital. *“In the community, they looked at us differently: as an organization that knows how to achieve results,”* shares Liudmyla.



Leader of the organization, Lyudmyla Savkova (far left) and Coordinator Tetiana Sokol (second from left) during the Post-award orientation meeting with Pact and other organizations implementing coalition grants. June 2023.

Entering a New Stage

A full-scale war can be expected to paralyze a young organization, but instead, *Grun* was activated in its work. Many internally displaced women with children moved to the *Grun* community from border areas of the Sumy and Kharkiv regions, requiring immediate assistance. With mentorship of the Eastern Hub, *Grun* successfully implemented projects providing humanitarian aid and psychosocial support to internally displaced women. They also facilitated a large-scale project to build a shelter in the village of Grun.



Liudmyla Savkova (at right) together with coalition project partners of *The Rural Woman Has Power*.



Second meeting of the Women's Council within the *The Rural Woman has Power* project. August 2023.

Since June 2023, the *Grun Community Development Fund*, together with the *Studio of Public Women's Initiatives WRO* and *Wide Circle* (also part of the *Superpower* network), implemented a new coalition project supported by *WoU*. The *Rural Woman has Power* coalition project aimed to enhance the social life of rural women, especially those recently displaced, and strengthen their influence in the community through decision making and connections. The project included the creation of women's councils in communities, the arrangement of a women's space in Grun, and even the organization of a weekly cinema featuring movies about the women's movement and women's rights. "We are happy that, together with *Pact*, we can implement all our ideas to support women! We gladly adopt skills from our partner organizations in the coalition, which are more experienced than we are," shares Liudmyla Savkova.



"Colleagues are really open to everything new, and they are constantly evolving," says Tetiana Chernetska about the *Grun Community Development Fund*. "That's why, from a small rural union, they have become an influential and capable WRO, in which I see even greater potential."

"We are no longer afraid to take responsibility," a story from *Shchastya Studio East Ukrainian support center for women WRO*

In 2019, seven women working at a sewing factory in the city of Starobilsk, Luhansk region, decided that they needed to unite to protect their rights. The women were internally displaced from occupied areas by Russia's invasion of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in 2014. The factory was organized with the support of one of the international funds for the employment of IDPs. "We needed perspective," says Maryna Brazhnikova, one of the founders and head of the WRO. "Besides, we wanted to help women like us." They named the newly created organization *Shchastya Studio (Studio of Happiness)* with the goal of improving women's lives.

"We had many ideas, but we didn't know how to implement them. We learned everything from scratch," says Oksana Ochкурова, the project manager of the WRO. Initially, *Shchastya Studio* implemented several small humanitarian aid initiatives for displaced women and children. It joined city council



projects, helping vulnerable groups during the COVID-19 epidemic. *“We mainly worked through direct procurement, as we did not yet have full-fledged projects,”* Oksana explains. In 2020, the organization joined the *Superpower* Program and in 2021, received a grant from Pact.

Seeing a Change



Maryna Brazhnikova, head of the organization (at right) during the final conference of *WoU*. November 2023.

Superpower offered training and experience exchange, and networking with other organizations – *“Everything we newcomers, needed,”* says Oksana, *“so we tried to be good students!”* *Shchastya Studio* underwent Pact’s integrated technical organizational capacity assessment (ITOCA) to identify the strengths and challenges facing their organization. They also developed a change action plan to move forward in addressing their most pressing challenges. With the Eastern Hub, they developed accounting, volunteer work, and gender equality and non-discrimination policies. They carefully prepared a strategic development plan for the organization. *“At the same time, our Hub and, personally,*

coordinator Tetiana Chernetska, gave us great attention, taking into account our specifics and needs,” notes Maryna.

At the advice of the Eastern Hub, the organization took an interest in gender issues, attended dozens of training sessions, and eventually identified the promotion of gender equality as one of the organization’s main goals.



“As a result, thanks to Superpower and our persistent work, we had a whole package of policies and procedures, a defined strategy, and areas of activity; in other words, our organization took a big step in its development,” summarizes Maryna.

Addressing the Gender Challenge

In 2021, Pact supported *Shchastya Studio*’s first full-scale project, a validation of their efforts. The project *“Ambassadors for Gender Equality”* aimed to promote gender equality principles among school students and in educational processes, serving 15 communities in the region. *“[The project] was a serious scale and serious responsibility because adolescents and youth were supposed to be the main beneficiaries,”* emphasizes the head of the organization. *Shchastya Studio* conducted a gender audit of selected schools and prepared recommendations for local education departments. *Shchastya Studio* also organized a training on gender issues for schools. And most importantly, they managed to attract many active boys and girls who formed the core of the ambassadors’



The *Shchastya Studio* Team and participants of their coalition project within the *WoU* project.



teams and held a series of events to popularize gender equality concepts such as debate club, blog café, and a presentation about women scientists. In total, the project reached 327 people, mainly youth.

“That project was very successful and gave a good start to the organization’s activities,” says Maryna. However, all planned projects started after that had to be put on hold, as the full-scale war began.

The most important thing is to stay alive

Starobilsk came under Russian occupation in March 2022. Some members of *Shchastya Studio* managed to leave, but the majority stayed in the city. *“Though it was dangerous, we volunteered secretly,”* says Maryna. *“People ran out of medicines, and we covertly got insulin, medications for cancer patients, and distributed them. We also set up a kitchen and prepared food for 300–400 people every day.”* Only in August 2022, Maryna, overcoming incredible difficulties, managed to leave the occupied territory with her son. *“We had to leave the sewing factory, the office, and lost several organization documents. But as we knew from 2014¹, the most important thing is to stay alive.”*

Eventually, Maryna and several other organization members found themselves in the city of Svaliava, Zakarpattia region in the west of the country away from the front line. For the second time, the displaced persons restarted everything from scratch.

Once settled, they organized a humanitarian center for IDPs and spent almost a year providing humanitarian aid to displaced persons, mainly women and children who had also relocated to Svaliava.



“Then our Eastern Hub started pulling us in: ‘Let us get involved! Let us get back to work!’ And we slowly started thinking about a new project,” Maryna shares.

The path to recovery



Training within *Shchastya Studio*’s coalition project.

“The thing is, there is generally not a lot of work opportunities for women in Zakarpattia region, especially in rural areas,” explains Oksana Ochкурова, Project Manager at *Shchastya Studio*. *And when you have children – it is even harder. So, women need online employment.”* And so, *Shchastya Studio* started a project supporting women’s entrepreneurship in the digital sphere, which received support from Pact. Beginning in June 2023, this coalition project is implemented jointly with two partner organizations from Irshava and Uzhhorod, with *Shchastya Studio* as the coalition leader. *“It’s*

symbolic that we started our first project after the resumption of activities with Pact and even as the leading organization,” notes Oksana. *“After all we’ve been through as displaced persons, we are no longer afraid to take responsibility. But trust and support from WoU project also played a role.”*

The project beneficiaries studied social media marketing, public relations management, e-commerce, and received training in business planning, financial management, and more. There were five times

¹Maryna is referring to previous experience in which she and other members of *Shchastya studio* were internally displaced from the occupied areas of Luhansk by Russia in 2014.

more willing participants than expected, so the organizers rearranged the program to accommodate more. “We already have extremely positive feedback from women. We see how they are rebuilding their lives, starting to act – some have even started their businesses,” Oksana says. “It’s a story about us,” adds Maryna. “A story we’ve been through and have become stronger. Thanks to Superpower and WoU project for being there for us!”

Becoming a leader in the NGO sector in a short period of time: A story from *Development Center ‘Women’s World’ WRO*

In January 2022, the Zaporizhzhia-based *Development Center ‘Women’s World’ WRO* launched an ambitious coalition project to counteract domestic violence and enhance security in seven of the largest communities in Zaporizhzhia region. It was planned to be implemented in collaboration with several partner organizations. This was the first project of the WRO supported by Pact and the first in which the organization assumed the role of leader of the coalition. The team was enthusiastic about its implementation. However, the full-scale war disrupted all plans just a month later.

Olena Zinovenko, the organization’s leader, recalls that the team was disoriented. “*What to do next? Close the project? Relocate? Or wait?*” Personally, for her, deciding was even more challenging, as she had already experienced Russia’s invasion in 2014 when Russia invaded the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Starting from Scratch

In 2014, Olena lived in Horlivka, Donetsk region, and worked in a management position in the tax office. When the Russian occupation army approached the city, she and her family decided to leave. They found shelter in Zaporizhzhia, one hundred fifty miles west. To integrate into her new community, Olena established contacts with other displaced persons, later becoming an active participant in the training organized by local NGOs for IDPs, and an initiator of many events for internally displaced women. “*I realized that I found my new calling – to be an activist,*” says Olena.

In 2018, she met Tetiana Sydorenko, also an IDP, and together, they decided to establish an WRO that would take care of internally displaced women and other vulnerable groups. Olena explains, “*Because we knew from our own experience what challenges displaced women face and what support they need.*”



Olena Zinovenko (at left), leader of *Development Center ‘Women’s World’ WRO*, with other participants of the *Superpower* program during the workshop on *Outcome Harvesting* methodology in the Project Result Assessment conducted by Pact. July 2023.

Growing the Organization’s Capacity

During its first 18 months, the young WRO implemented several small projects, mostly through the support of local NGOs. They received rejections for more significant projects, including one submitted to Pact.



“Back then, we already dreamed of cooperating with Pact, knowing it as a powerful international organization,” says Olena. “But besides enthusiasm, we had very little experience and knowledge.”

When the organization was selected for the *Superpower* program within the *WoU* project the team recognized the opportunity. However, Olena admits they did not even imagine the scale of the training that would be provided to them.

“I can say that Pact is very demanding in training. Personally, I found it challenging to absorb everything. But, after the first training sessions, I knew that I was gaining knowledge and skills that could be applied immediately,” says Olena. “Thanks to our Hub, we received great experience and saw an excellent example of networking.”

Through the *Superpower* program, the organization received a boost to its organizational development and strengthened its operational capacity. As a result, several new projects with the support of national organizations were implemented. *“Together with the WoU project, we progressed quite quickly and moved to the next level,”* says Olena. *Women’s World* became part of the *“Zaporizhzhia 1325”* coalition, uniting two dozen organizations in Zaporizhzhia region to strengthen the role of women, promote peace and security (in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325). In 2020, Olena was elected the head of the coalition.



Olena Zinovenko (at left) with other participants of the *Superpower* program from the Eastern Cluster during the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

Making the Right Decision during War



Humanitarian aid provided by *Women’s World* within *WoU*. Spring 2022.

In the first days after the full-scale of Russia’s war in Ukraine, when the organization began to implement its large coalition project under *WoU*, Olena was poised to make decisions about what to do next.

When the initial emotions settled, Olena decided to stay in Zaporizhzhia. *“I felt that personally, and as an organization, we would be needed here, and I immediately started looking for ways to mobilize our resources to support people.”* In a few days, they received a message from *WoU* with a proposal to reformat the project to provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs and others affected by the war. *“It was a great support,”* says Olena. *“We are still grateful to the project for this!”* *Women’s World* managed to provide humanitarian assistance to more than 350 vulnerable women and their families, even in the most remote communities of the region, and offer psychological support to women. Later, Olena involved other organizations from the *“Zaporizhzhia 1325”* coalition, donors, and volunteers, so that its successful organization of humanitarian assistance extended further.

Taking Responsibility

In 2023, *Women’s World* resumed its original activities. With *WoU* support, the organization, as a coalition leader, is implementing a project on localizing National Action Plan 1325 in Zaporizhzhia region.



The project aims to enhance the safety of local women and women IDPs, considering the wartime conditions. Additionally, together with two partner organizations, the organization started the project “Woman: Free, Independent, Confident,” for women in relocated communities, which aims to enhance their financial capacity, employment, and entrepreneurial development. *“Now, in Zaporizhzhia, our organization has become a brand,”* says Olena. *“As a leading organization, we not only involve other organizations, but generously share our experience and expertise.”* As Olena testifies, they have a good example to follow.



Olena Zinovenko (at right) with representatives of the coalition implementing the project “Woman: Free, Independent, Confident”. July 2023.



“The WoU project accepted us, supported us, and gave us the strength to develop. Now we are doing the same for other organizations.”

Scaling Up in Times of War: A story from Association of Psychologists and Psychoanalysts ‘Vzayemodiya’ Zaporizhzhia Regional WRO

Initially founded in 2004, *Vzayemodiya (Interaction)* was a professional association of psychologists and psychoanalysts dedicated to the professional development and protection of their members’ interests. Later, under the leadership of Iryna Kuratchenko, the organization began providing consultations to local police on cases of violence and offering psychological assistance to victims. *“We conducted research in the Zaporizhzhia region and were shocked by the scale of this issue: literally every eighth woman has experienced violence in one form or another.”* That is how the organization began to work on prevention of domestic and gender-based violence. Later, the organization added combating human trafficking and human rights work to its activities. The organization implemented several projects with the LGBTQ community in Zaporizhzhia. Through almost 20 years of activity, the organization has established partnerships with international foundations and gained credibility in the region.



The team of *Vzayemodiya*.

“What attracted us to Superpower? We wanted to develop our relations with other women’s rights organizations, because supporting women was our priority,” says Iryna. *“When we were working on coalition projects, we realized the opportunities offered by a community of like-minded people: the exchange of experience, information, and mutual support. Superpower gave us the opportunity to finally work on our organizational development. Because we were always overloaded with projects, and we worked on capacity development sporadically, and rather formally.”*



The starting point

“When we conducted the ITOCA, we were able to understand what we needed to improve, and what we needed to develop from scratch.” It turned out to be a lot of work. That’s why Iryna, as the head of the organization, encouraged her team not to miss Superpower-led trainings and seminars. *“Colleagues chose what they were interested in or closer to their function in the organization, and then passed this knowledge on to others.”* Training on fundraising, communications, and adaptive management proved to be very helpful for the team. *“The training on gender-based violence gave us an understanding of how to properly implement projects on this topic,”* Iryna reiterates.



“In addition, we have a very active Hub coordinator, Tetiana Chernetska. Despite [Covid-19] quarantine, we regularly met online, discussed various matters, and exchanged information about projects.”

Tetiana also consulted the organization individually. *“And I’ll tell you as a psychologist that when you have an external consultant or coach, it really stimulates you to be active.”* With the assistance of the Eastern Hub, Vzayemodiya revised policies and developed several new ones, including a gender equality and non-discrimination policy. Importantly, they created a development strategy. *“Because just imagine, we were a solid organization, and we did not have a strategic plan. By the end of the second year in Superpower program, we had almost all the necessary policies, organizational structure, and development strategy for five years. We felt more systematic, organized, and stronger!”*

Support Across the Country

“If we hadn’t had these achievements, I really don’t know how the organization would have coped with the [full-scale] war,” shares the head of the WRO. In the first months, several members evacuated



Iryna Kuratchenko, the head Vzayemodiya.

to Lviv and Chernivtsi, in the west of Ukraine, where they began providing psychological assistance in shelters for IDPs. The rest of the team remained in Zaporizhzhia, providing psychological support at several humanitarian centers that welcomed people from combat zones. *“In the first six months, we provided over two thousand consultations,”* says Iryna. *“It was challenging and resource intensive. When the Eastern Hub resumed meetings and organized support groups, it greatly helped us stay operational.”* The skills of adaptive management (a training organized by Pact in the summer of 2022)

also proved to be helpful, as the team had to quickly allocate both funds and professional resources to aid an influx of IDPs experiencing trauma.

Operating on a New Scale

Overall, according to Iryna, the full-scale war and the enormous demand for psychological assistance seemed to activate the organization’s internal resources. *“I think it is no exaggeration to say that the workload has increased tenfold,”* stated Iryna. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, with the support of Ukrainian and international funds, the organization has implemented more than ten projects providing psychosocial support to people affected by the war, especially internally displaced women



and children. Recently, the organization implemented a project which spanned ten regions of Ukraine reaching 2,500 people. As part of this project, the organization conducted research on the mental state of people and developed training for psychologists at the grassroots level, which they plan to share with the professional psychology practitioners community.

“We also pulled ourselves together and finally opened the Psychological Assistance Center in Zaporizhzhia, which we had dreamed of for many years!” There are rooms for group therapy, a sensory room for correctional work, and a children’s space; everything to provide psychological support to various target audiences.

“The fact that we have intensified our work and scaled up so much means that we were ready for this, organizationally,” Iryna concludes. *“And we were ready, in particular, because we strengthened ourselves with the Superpower program from the WoU project. And we are very grateful to those who created it!”*

Currently, *Vzayemodiya* is returning to its core activities. It is preparing several projects to support women affected by domestic and gender-based violence, and a new direction for the organization is working with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).



“Unfortunately, war shifts priorities. We face a complex and responsible task, and we are preparing for it carefully. And I know that the skills and knowledge we gained in Superpower will help us to be as effective as possible.”

A story about shifting from a group of like-minded people to an organization with a clearly defined mission from *Studio of Public Women’s Initiatives WRO*

The *Studio of Public Women’s Initiatives WRO* was founded in 2019 in the village of Niu York, Donetsk region – a village which now sits along the front-line – by a group of like-minded women who came together to help authorities improve the standard of living and security in the village.

In 2020, the organization joined the *Superpower* program. With the support of the Eastern Hub, the members of the organization conducted an internal assessment, developed the organization’s activity strategy, internal policies, and operational plans.



“The findings of the ITOCA were used as the foundation for the institutional capacity strengthening plan. Accordingly, it was necessary to update the organization’s vision and mission and to develop a strategic plan, various policies, and procedures that we did not even know about before we created the organization. Participation in the program helped us grow from a mere group of like-minded people into a real organization, with a clearly defined mission, action plan, feminist values, management structure, policies, and procedures,” says Tetiana Krasko, head of the organization. The organization is focused on protecting women’s rights, empowering women, and preventing gender-based and domestic violence.



Team of the organization.



Tetiana Krasko (far right) with participants of Superpower program and Pact representatives. December 2021.



“Participating in the Superpower program and the mentoring support of the Eastern Hub helped us to understand our mission, purpose, and direction of activities. Thus, we became stronger and found our place among WROs in Ukraine,” says Tetiana. As of 2022, the organization has relocated to Poltava region due to ongoing attacks in their home village.

Equipped with the Right Methodologies and Tools

Thanks to Superpower networking events, the organization’s members learned more about the feminist movement, got to know other WROs, and best practices in advocacy and impact.



“Networking, in general, helps us find ideas for projects, analyze mistakes, exchange life hacks, experiences, and support each other,” remarks Tetiana.



Tetiana Krasko during Monitoring and Evaluation training. December 2021.

Participation in *WoU* training sessions also helped the organization to learn new methodologies and tools for work both within the organization and with target groups and communities. For example, the collective impact methodology, introduced to the organization through the project, was successfully implemented in their external work.

“An event held using the collective impact methodology became one of the most vivid during the organization’s work in the village of Khomutets, Poltava region, and had the exact result we expected – the creation of an initiative group of IDPs and local residents of the village,” Tetiana explains.

Moreover, in 2022, thanks to mentoring provided by the Eastern Hub, the organization won six different grant applications, including two for organizational development.



“The Eastern Hub not only assists in writing grant applications and advises during their implementation but also identifies the direction for the organization’s further development,” notes Tetiana.

The viability of the organization is also supported by the knowledge gained from the project’s training sessions, especially in resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, and human-centered design.

A Forced Relocation

Ongoing attacks by Russia in their home village forced most members of the organization to leave their homes. As a result, the organization has relocated and is now based in Myrhorod, Poltava region. With support and networking, *Studio of Public Women’s Initiative* started providing humanitarian aid to internally displaced women and women who remained in the combat zone in Niu York. The organization’s activities also focus on the integration of IDPs and women’s economic empowerment. The Studio of Public Women’s Initiatives continues to work within the “1325. Women, Peace, Security” Coalition, for which it has prepared the first public annual report on its activities, developed a communication strategy and website, and plans to establish a social enterprise.



Tetiana Krasko (at right) during the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

The shift in the focus of activities is associated not only with the war, but also with the development of the organization itself. “*Now that we understand what to do next, there is still a significant amount of work ahead in terms of capacity building and positioning the organization in the public sector,*” notes Tetiana.

The 12 Ophelias documentary series promotes rights and inclusion of women with disabilities: A story from Modern Woman WRO

Kharkiv-based *Modern Woman WRO* has been operating since 2000. It supports and empowers women in the economy, education, culture, and the arts to create a world of equal opportunities.

For far too long, women and girls with disabilities have been invisible, including to advocates of women’s rights and of disability rights, and this has increased their vulnerability. *Modern Woman* was awarded a grant under *WoU* to help women with disabilities be heard and visible.



Modern Woman members at rehearsal for *12 Ophelias*. July 2020.

How it all started

In 2020, *Modern Woman* created the documentary miniseries *12 Ophelias* with the support of *WoU*, the *Arabesque Theater Studio*, *Kharkiv Inclusive Theater Studio*, and the *Mykola Lysenko Kharkiv Na-*

tional Academic Opera and Ballet Theater. Written by American author Caridad Svich, the play is an alternative story of the heroines of Hamlet – a story of what could have happened if women of the 16th century had rights to make decisions on their own. Ophelia is resurrected after drowning and able to discover a whole new way of life. Svich gives female roles more prominence, with strong female characters pushing back against patriarchy. It was the first such inclusive performance in Ukraine. The production paired professional actors with women with disabilities who were interested in taking part.

Due to Covid-19, filming and rehearsals had to take place outdoors. The premiere on stage never took place, but the recorded version of the miniseries was released with support of *WoU*. A five-part documentary series about the *12 Ophelias* stage play, its heroes, and a ‘behind the scenes’ segment by *Modern Woman* aired nationwide in Ukraine in December 2020, along with a November 2020 screening at a media center in Kharkiv.



The *12 Ophelias* filming process. July 2020.

Iryna



Iryna during a rehearsal. July 2020.

Iryna Sukach had dreamed of performing on stage since her childhood, but for a long time she was unsure whether it was something people who used wheelchairs could do. She pushed herself and was able to get into dancing, but it was not until *Modern Woman* endeavored to produce *12 Ophelias* that she felt an opportunity to become an actress.

Rehearsals would be held 150 kilometers from Iryna’s home, but she decided it was an acceptable inconvenience to finally get to try acting.

“I had to drop dancing some time ago, and getting a role in the play gave me a chance to get back on the stage,” Sukach says. *“Everything I have in this life I had to work hard for, and now I just proved to myself once again that I can do it.”*

Iryna is one of six women with disabilities who were part of the *12 Ophelias* production.

Fiona

For Fiona Kudrevatykh, being in the play helped her to accept that a wheelchair should not stop her from realizing her dreams. An English teacher who is transitioning into information technology, she had long wanted to try acting, but was not sure she could because she uses a wheelchair. She took a role in *12 Ophelias* and the documentary features her journey into acting.



Fiona (at right) during a *12 Ophelias* rehearsal. July 2020.



Central Cluster

The Central Interregional Hub (Central Hub) for the Capacity Building of local women's rights organizations (WROs) is *Spring of Hope* WRO. As of December 31, 2023, the Central Cluster included the following local WROs:

- *Association of Ukrainian Guides* WRO;
- *Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance* WRO;
- *Bureau of Institutional Development* WRO;
- *Institute of Local Democracy 'Open Society'* WRO;
- *Girls* WRO;
- *Institute for Gender Transformations* WRO;
- *Kropyvnytskyi Association 'Public Initiatives'* WRO;
- *Youth Chooses Life* WRO;
- *Oleksandriya Gender Information Center (OGIC)* WRO;
- *Vinnitsia City Organization for Social Development of specific categories of vulnerable youth PAROSTOK* WRO;
- *Strategy of the Future* WRO;
- *Territory of Kindness* WRO;
- *Feminist center 'Aelita'* WRO; and
- *Time for Protection* WRO.

Teaching, Learning, and Constantly Growing. A story from *Spring of Hope* WRO, Central Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of local WROs



"Capacity building means sustainability, continuous progress, and the ability to respond flexibly to society's needs. The WoU project encourages our organization, Spring of Hope, to develop constantly. For us, participation is both an opportunity to train other organizations and to learn from them," says Khrystyna Orlova, Executive Director of the WRO *Spring of Hope* and coordinator of the Hub.

Spring of Hope, which joined the *Women of Ukraine* project in 2020, had previous experience in the development of NGOs. However, in this project, the organization focused on the capacity building of WROs. The organization serves as the Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of 12 local WROs from six central regions of Ukraine.

"Being a Hub [leading] capacity development means helping [other] organizations in various areas, starting from evaluation of their capacity and potential to mentoring in the development of policies and organization strategies, training in the basics of monitoring and evaluation, human-centered design tools, and more," notes Khrystyna.



The Spring of Hope team.



Khrystyna Orlova (at left) at the seminar “Application of the Workshop Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment by Pact. July 2023.

Developing their Own Capacity



Organizations of the Central Cluster. Training “Coaching and mentoring. How to use them for personal and organizational growth?” September 2023.

Over the years, the hub has strengthened its own capacity, deepened its understanding of feminist values, strengthened its team, and gained new competencies.

“We achieved sustainability, learned new approaches, gained new expertise. Our team has grown. We realized that our main resource is people, and we develop it. Our own potential is growing, and we pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation, internal policies, human-centered design – all of which we learned from the project,” continues Khrystyna.

Through its participation in *WoU*, the organization identified the need for a marketing strategy and began developing it. The opportunity to communicate with leading experts in the feminist movement, who are its driving force, became crucial for *Spring of Hope*.

“The project constantly encourages us to develop,” summarizes Khrystyna.



“Ring the Bell for Gender Equality” campaign. Central cluster. March 2020.

Leadership through Support: A story from Vinnytsia City Organization for Social Development of Specific Categories of Vulnerable Youth PAROSTOK WRO

In the late 1990s in newly independent Ukraine, Iryna Sarancha, a girl with a disability, had to defend her right to go to university and pursue a degree. She achieved her goal, became a student, and realized that the rights of persons with disabilities needed to be advocated for. This led to her founding of the *Vinnytsia City Organization for Social Development of Specific Categories of Vulnerable Youth PAROSTOK WRO (Sprout)* in Vinnytsia, which aimed to protect the social and economic interests of young persons with disabilities and to facilitate their adaptation to society.

Since then, Iryna has earned a Ph.D. and serves as Lecturer at the Vinnytsia Pedagogical University. She continues leading *PAROSTOK* which has been actively working in the public sector for 24 years. During this time, the organization has implemented around 200 projects in support of persons with disabilities, counts more than 100 active participants, and has opened a social center and a daytime activity group for persons with mental disorders, which operate on a continuous basis.



Head of *PAROSTOK*, Iryna Sarancha.



“From the moment of our foundation, we have gained enormous experience,” Iryna says, *“but often it was spontaneous, not systematized, because we lacked specialized knowledge on how to analyze our activities and how to develop strategies for the organization’s development.”*

Taking an Inclusive Approach

In 2020, Iryna turned her attention to the *Superpower* program. *“I saw that the goal was to build the capacity of local organizations, with specific training programs, and thought that this was exactly what we needed!”* One of the first training programs was on human-centered design.

“Firstly, I appreciated the quality of these trainings, and secondly, the inclusivity in the approach, meaning I could apply this knowledge in our work with vulnerable groups of people,” shares Iryna.



The head of *PAROSTOK*, Iryna Sarancha, and her team.

Consultations from the Central Hub – *Spring of Hope*, which serves a mentor for *PAROSTOK* within the *Superpower* program, proved extremely helpful.

In 2020, *PAROSTOK* received funding from the WoU for the project, *“Don’t be afraid – you’re not alone!”*, aimed at reducing the level of violence against women with disabilities in the Vinnytsia region. Through the project, at least 80 women were trained to combat violence and received legal and psychological consultations. The project also developed and broadcast on social media several animated videos on combating violence, which gained tens of thousands of views.



“Thanks to the experts from Pact, we gained experience in a very systematic, comprehensive project, which included both advocacy components and an information campaign,” Iryna summarizes.



“We helped PAROSTOK to correctly identify the goals and tools of each specific project to achieve more significant results,” says Khrystyna Orlova, coordinator of the Central Hub.

A Tree Grows from a Sprout

Strengthened with new skills and knowledge, *PAROSTOK* was preparing new large-scale projects when the war interfered with its plans. Many IDPs arrived in Vinnytsia, with as many as 3,500 living with disabilities. Many of them, in very difficult circumstances, turned to *PAROSTOK* for help.

There was a lot of work to do to address the urgent needs of IDPs with disabilities, so it was necessary to optimize operations urgently. Iryna Sarancha suggested creating a Humanitarian Hub based at *PAROSTOK* to support persons with disabilities, which would involve volunteers, government representatives, and charitable organizations. Consultations within the *Superpower* program helped. *“Together with PAROSTOK, we formulated the regulations to operationalize the humanitarian center and provided consultations on resource allocation and fundraising,”* says Khrystyna Orlova.

In November 2022, the humanitarian center started its activities. It now provides support to 500 families of persons with disabilities, including social support, humanitarian and household assistance, psychologist consultations, and activities for children.



Iryna Sarancha (right) with Khrystyna Orlova (left), Project Coordinator from the Central Hub – *Spring of Hope*, during the workshop *Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment* by Pact. July 2023.

“With the humanitarian center, we managed not only to quickly reformat the work of the organization, but also to become a leader that united various actors to support people,” Iryna says.

Take, in order to Give



Representatives of *PAROSTOK* (left and center) during a Community of Practice session for *Superpower* members. June 2023.

Following the mentorship they received from the Central Hub, *PAROSTOK* founded its own project, “Ways of Responding of the Public Sector to Socio-Humanitarian Crises,” in which it helps other NGOs – mostly those caring for persons with disabilities – to reformat their work and remain effective in wartime conditions. *PAROSTOK* organizes trainings and provides consultations and mentorship support. Iryna herself has become an ambassador and expert for one of the international funds that help persons with disabilities all over Ukraine.



“I think thanks to the WoU project, we’ve gained such a great experience in mentorship and support, we’ve become so inspired that now we are extending this circle of support to other people and organizations,” Iryna notes.

Creating Space to Develop: A story from *Institute of Local Democracy ‘Open Society’ WRO*

In the late 1990s, Vinnytsia resident Svitlana Khodakova faced the question of where to work after maternity leave. Before giving birth, she worked as a therapist, but since her university days, she had been actively involved in the student community, observing political processes in Ukraine. When she attended a training for civic activists in Kyiv conducted by a Harvard professor, her doubts vanished. *“I was so inspired by new approaches to civic work and fascinated by Western experience in civic activism that I immediately wanted to apply it here!”* says Svitlana. Gaining experience in the civic sector, Svitlana Khodakova founded the *Institute of Local Democracy ‘Open Society’ (Open Society)* in 2007, aiming to promote democratic development and civic engagement in the region.



The Institute of Local Democracy ‘Open Society’ team.

Identifying Weaknesses

Over the years, the organization implemented numerous projects, built a dedicated team, and several members became experts and trainers in other civic and state projects. In 2017, thanks to the advocacy efforts of *Open Society*, Vinnytsia City Council became the first in Ukraine to join the *European Charter for Equality of Women and Men*, enhancing the organization’s credibility in the region.



Svitlana Khodakova (at center), head Institute of Local Democracy ‘Open Society’, with the team at work. July 2023.

“We had too many things to do, and we did not focus on the actual development of the organization at all,” says Svitlana. *“And that was a mistake.”* Upon conducting an ITOCA, which looks at strengths and challenges within an organization, Svitlana admits that *“Indicators [of our capabilities] weren’t very high. I realized that we needed to catch up to grow and become more capable.”*

Svitlana and other team members actively attended trainings held by Pact and the Central Hub on monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, and more. They worked particularly closely with the Central Hub to develop their internal organization

policies. *“Pact highlighted the weaknesses within the WRO that we eventually improved. We became more structured, organized, and clearly defined our development strategy,”* says Svitlana. They immediately began implementing this experience in the community. *“If it worked in our case, it would help*



other organizations and structures.” The organization proposed developing non-discrimination and gender equality policies for Vinnytsia local authorities. Eventually, these policies were developed and approved at a session of the Vinnytsia City Council.

Scaling Outreach

In 2021, the organization initiated its first project with *WoU* support on advocating for non-violent communication in preventing domestic violence. *“Usually, we deal with the consequences of violence, but in this project, we could focus on its prevention,”* says Svitlana. Based on the advocacy knowledge gained in the Superpower program, the *Institute of Local Democracy ‘Open Society’* was able to reach not only the professional community of social workers, but also other target groups such as students, vulnerable women, and people planning to get married. Successful advocacy led to changes in city and regional social programs related to preventing domestic violence.



Svitlana Khodakova (at center) at the workshop *Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment* by Pact. July 2023.

Networking Experience

During the first year of the full-scale war, *Open Society* redirected its activities to provide humanitarian aid and psychological support to women IDPs in Vinnytsia and the region. Continuing this, in 2023, the organization received funding from *WoU* for a coalition project on advocating for medical and psychosocial services for women in rural areas and women IDPs. The project started with conduct of a survey on the availability of services among 400 respondents in Vinnytsia region and initial training on a gender approach to service provision held for psychologists and social workers. *“I believe coalition projects are an extremely successful solution,”* says Svitlana. *“For example, in our case, along with two partner organizations, we tripled assistance to vulnerable groups of women. In the coalition, we have a great exchange of experience, competencies, and an atmosphere of complete trust and support. All of this is thanks to the very useful networking practices during Superpower and cooperation with Pact.”*



Svitlana Khodakova (at right) with other members of the coalition implementing *“Women’s Organizations’ Response to Security Challenges and Advocacy for the Localization of the NAP 1325”*. August 2023.

Open Society is also part of another coalition comprised of five civic organizations implementing another *WoU*-supported project: *Women’s Organizations Responding to Security Challenges*. Among other issues, the project – perhaps for the first time in the region – will explore and improve safety within civic organizations, including cyber and information security, develop response algorithms to threats, etc.



“We’ve never done anything like this before,” says Svitlana. *“But that’s exactly why we value cooperation with Pact because it gives us the opportunity to learn new experiences and always opens up space for development.”*

I Growing Up: A story from *Girls* WRO

How did the idea for the *Girls* WRO appear? It was literally born in a maternity hospital. Back in 2016, the future leader of the organization, Yulia Sporysh, gave birth to a child and met a woman in the maternity hospital who was very upset about her motherhood. She admitted that she was completely unprepared for pregnancy, childbirth, and new motherhood responsibilities. Yulia thought about how the lack of knowledge about their physiology, reasonable pregnancy planning, and the challenges of motherhood makes women victims of circumstances and unhappy in their new experience. That's how the idea of *Lectures for Girls*, a series of educational events about female physiology and health, was born. Following tremendous interest, in 2019 Yulia and like-minded people decided to establish a WRO that would support girls and young women more broadly, to protect their rights and teach them how to build a life strategy. This is how *Girls* was born.



The team of *Girls* WRO.

Strategy and plan

When Yulia learned about the *Superpower* program, *Girls* was only a year old and worked mostly on a volunteer basis. “We were new to the public sphere,” says the organization’s leader, “and with our ambitions and many plans, we desperately needed project management skills, cooperation with donors and grantors, and an understanding of how the system works in the third sector.” The *Superpower* program turned out to be extremely relevant and the entire *Girls* team actively joined trainings.



Lectures by *Girls* for girls.

In 2020-2021, the organization’s members attended dozens of *Superpower* trainings and seminars on grantwriting, human-centered design, stakeholder mapping, and many others. “We tried to take almost everything that *Superpower* offered,” says Yulia, “because this knowledge was very structured and practical.”

According to her, the development of a strategy and an operational plan for the development of the WRO was particularly effective. “When you have a strategy and an operational plan, it is much easier to understand what the organization lacks and what

expertise is needed,” says Yulia. Moreover, at the training stage, and later, during the implementation of the first projects, coordinators from the Hub were always there to provide expertise and recommend appropriate specialists. “The experience of mentoring and support is also one of the most valuable experiences we gained at *Superpower* and immediately tried to implement,” says Yulia. For example, *Girls* conducted several training sessions within their regional cluster, and the organization’s leader acted as a mentor at several events.

Relying on the knowledge gained from *Superpower*, *Girls* started implementing new projects on sexual education and gender-based violence prevention. The organization managed to attract leading Ukrainian foundations to support these initiatives, and in 2021, the organization began working with

UNICEF on the *Health Without Shame* program. As a result, thousands of hours of lectures were held in remote villages and towns of Ukraine for more than 100,000 children.

These large-scale projects have encouraged *Girls* to develop rapidly as an organization.



“Thus, by the end of 2021, we turned out to be one of the most developed organizations among those that entered the Superpower program in 2020,” Yulia concludes.

Experience as an encouragement

When full-scale war began in February 2022, *Girls* set a goal not only to survive and preserve as an organization, but also to be as useful as possible. In the first months of the war, the organization re-focused on humanitarian aid to women and children affected by the war. *“It was then that our experience of networking with Superpower and connections with other women’s organizations came in handy,”* says Yulia. *“We coordinated our efforts with organizations on the ground, exchanged information about sources of support and shared the organization’s experience of working during the war.”* During the first year of the full-scale war, *Girls* provided humanitarian, psychological and legal assistance to nearly 180,000 people, opened a center for social and psychological rehabilitation for children, and established several safe spaces for women and girls in different cities of Ukraine. *“Probably, because we were already a structured and organizationally more developed organization at the beginning of the war, we were able to survive. And not only that: we managed to turn this experience into an opportunity for development,”* says Yulia. *“During the war, we grew more than 10 times! And now our projects cover all of Ukraine.”*



Distribution of humanitarian aid to residents of Kyiv region by *Girls* WRO.

As of 2023, *Girls* is implementing several of their own projects and cooperating with leading international organizations. *“Today, we are an organization that is engaged in the capacity building of partner organizations on the ground, and we see how much work needs to be done,”* says the leader of *Girls*. *“Therefore, having our own experience of growth with Superpower, I would like to see such programs implemented for many years and help build a strong civil society sector in Ukraine.”*

From the state sector to public initiatives: A story from Territory of Kindness WRO

Liudmyla Kudymets has always been an active resident of the Kozyatyn community. She was elected to the city council and later headed the Department of External Relations and Promotions at the Kozyatyn City Council. While working in local government, she often contacted NGOs when it came to recruiting volunteers, organizing assistance, or training.

“I realized that the work of an NGO can be very effective and sometimes achieves its goals faster than, say, government agencies,” says Liudmyla. Together with Natalia Mashtaler, an employment center



specialist, and Natalia Pavliuk, an activist, she decided to found an organization that would protect women’s rights, promote their economic empowerment, and increase their participation in social life. “There was no such organization for women in our district, and there were many urgent problems to be solved,” explains Liudmyla. So in 2015, the WRO, called *Territory of Kindness*, was registered.



Members of *Territory of Kindness* WRO.

A weekend WRO



Liudmyla with colleagues at work.

From the very beginning, the organization was mainly involved in local projects. They helped vulnerable groups of women and their families, conducted an advocacy campaign in support of women’s businesses, created a calendar of successful women in the district, and organized a helpline for women who had suffered from domestic violence. “We had a lot of tasks, and all of our members combined civic activities with their main jobs – I called us a ‘weekend WRO’, says Liudmyla, “so we didn’t have enough time to develop the organization.”

Nudge to Action

In 2020, the Central Hub *Spring of Hope* with which they had previously cooperated, shared an opportunity for *Territory of Kindness* to apply for the *Superpower* program.

“I looked at the program and thought it was a good chance to take care of ourselves, so we applied,” says Liudmyla. She adds that she and her fellow members immediately took part in trainings and seminars. Sometimes they had to take time off work to keep up with their studies. “But this whole process was not destructive – it encouraged us to act.”

With the support of the Central Hub, they conducted the ITOCA and developed internal policies. “The training in Vinnytsia on resource mobilization was very useful,” says Liudmyla. “And thanks to our coordinators, we realized that we should delegate authority within the organization to increase efficiency and keep up with everything.”

According to Liudmyla, the training provided by *WoU* strengthened the organization and helped it to structure all internal processes. And when the full-scale war started, *Territory of Kindness* was able to quickly mobilize and organize humanitarian aid for IDP women and children, as well as vulnerable local residents. “In our Vinnytsia region, many organizations could not survive the war and collapsed, but we, despite the fact that several of our members went abroad, survived and even proved to be effective,” says Liudmyla. “I believe this is due to the fact that *Superpower* program happened in our lives at the right time, where we learned how to cope with challenges.”



Territory of Kindness members participating in training with the Central Hub – *Spring of Hope*.



Partnership experience



Territory of Kindness member Iryna Kolesnyk together with a trainer at the *Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment* workshop conducted by Pact. July 2023.

In 2023, the organization became a member of the *Safety and Equality Coalition* and, together with two other WROs that are members of *Superpower*, began implementing a *WoU* coalition project to advocate for medical and psychosocial services for IDP and rural women.

The project has already conducted surveys and focus group discussions on the availability of services in rural communities, as well as trainings on gender mainstreaming in service delivery. Thanks to the organization’s extensive connections among Kozyatyn district communities, it managed to involve many local social and medical workers and representatives of local authorities, to whom the results of the research were presented. *“Although*

our IDPs often formally express satisfaction with the level of services, such surveys reveal a lot of real problems,” summarizes Liudmyla, *“and I am very glad that we will help to eliminate them.”*

Liudmyla notes that *Superpwer’s* approach quickly teaches trust-building, finding common solutions, and learning. *“In the coalition, we are all open to each other, so we are happy to learn from our more experienced partners.”* For the organization, this is the first project of this scale that covers several regions.

Territory of Kindness is already actively making plans for its own large-scale projects. *“We would like to implement a project in our community that will have a long-term impact, such as opening a shelter for women who have suffered from domestic violence or a rehabilitation center for our female and male veterans,”* says the WRO leader. As for Liudmyla herself, she has recently been thinking about leaving the civil service and engaging fully in civic activities.



Focus groups involving rural women held under *Territory of Kindness’* coalition project.



“During this time of working with the WoU project, I have seen how effective and influential WROs can be, how much benefit they can bring to society. I want our organization to be exactly like that!”

Becoming a guide for other civil society organizations and working in synergy with them and local authorities: A story from *Oleksandriya Gender Information Center WRO*

Oleksandriya is a city that is comfortable for living. This is the dream of the members of the *Oleksandriya Gender Information Center (OGIC) WRO* and they are working hard to make it a reality. They also cultivate women’s leadership, uphold feminist values, and promote gender equality.

Today, the *OGIC* has more than ten successfully implemented projects, four of which the organization has implemented with Pact. The organization has developed effective cooperation with local authorities and other civil society organizations and has reached a level of development at which it is now helping other organizations to develop. When *OGIC* joined the *Superpower* for WROs program in 2020, it was implementing only one project.



OGIC’s team at the Forum Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context. March 2023.



OGIC members with members of a local partner organization in a meeting with Deputy Mayor Iryna Chemerys during the Central Cluster Community of Practice. June 2023.

A solid basis



“By being a part of Superpower, we went from an organization that operated at the library and implemented a maximum of one or two projects a year with a budget of a maximum of \$1,000 to a sustainable, self-sufficient organization that has the resources to implement projects with an annual budget of at least \$100,000,” says Lyubov Kahn, the organization’s board chairperson since 2021.

Participation in the program and the support of the project’s Central Hub, *Spring of Hope*, inspired change. The *ITOCA*, training sessions, consulting and mentoring support, communities of practice, collective impact methodology, and networking gave the organization a sense of a solid foundation and stimulated development.

In *Superpower*, the organization was equipped with useful tools for their internal development and external programming. *Collective impact* methodology has become key to the organization’s effective advocacy campaigns. By consolidating efforts and gaining the support of business representatives,



Lyubov Kahn (third from right) at the Central Cluster's collective impact event. June 2021.

local authorities and civil society organizations, OGIC implements initiatives and develops local development programs. The human-centered design methodology helps the organization to better understand the needs of women and girls, find innovative solutions, and develop responsive, relevant services, such as career coaching.

People are the main priority

“Capacity building is, among other things, the process of creating an effective and sustainable team that can achieve its goals even in the most difficult circumstances,” Liubov is convinced.

Today, thanks to *Superpower*, OGIC has a powerful, qualified team and clearly defined strategic goals based on feminist values.

Liubov notes that they care about each other member of the team and make efforts to develop each of their capabilities. *“When each of us develops, the organization develops,”* adds Liubov. *“After all, to help others, you first need to understand how to help yourself, how to develop to benefit more.”*

Networking also helps the organization in its work. New partnerships not only open up opportunities, but also allow us to share experiences, challenges, analyze how to do things better, differently, and find solutions.



A Community of Practice session of the Central Cluster, co-organized by OGIC. June 2023.

A story of resilience from Kirovohrad regional organization of the All-Ukrainian public organization ‘Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance’

Capacity development not only benefits the organization itself, but also its beneficiaries. This is exactly what occurred for the Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance WRO. We all became stronger and more resilient,” says Alla Voloshyna, head of the organization. She is convinced that participation in WoU was a key moment for the organization.



Alla Voloshyna at the Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context forum. March 2023.

Facing the people



Alla Voloshyna (at far left) at the Central Cluster's Monitoring and Evaluation training. January 2022.

Gender-sensitive processes that the organization developed as part of the project have set the working rhythm for the *Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance*. After all, they are human-centered. According to Alla, the organization has turned its face to the people who work in the team.

A result of monitoring and evaluation training conducted by the Central Hub has been the organization's active use of monitoring and evaluation tools in its practice. In particular, it conducted a survey of beneficiaries – volunteer centers that receive institutional support services under one of its projects.

Application of this monitoring and evaluation tool made it possible to identify the needs of volunteer centers and provide the necessary services in response: organizing fundraising and psychological support trainings, networking events, and helping them prepare and publish annual reports for the first time. This application of monitoring and evaluation tools has made clients of the *Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance* more visible. The organization also conducted surveys of stakeholders and team members. In general, the use of monitoring and evaluation tools helped to track the evolution of the organization and its beneficiaries, and to focus on continuous development and improvement.

Leveraging opportunities

The *ITOCA*, conducted by the Central Hub, helped the organization to see areas of improvement and start working on them.

“We took everything from the Superpower for WROs program, used the opportunities to the maximum and strengthened the organization,” says Alla.

As it turned out, the organization managed to create a space of trust between team members before the full-scale war, which later made it possible to achieve its planned results and expand its areas of activity despite operational challenges including relocations of team members.



Alla Voloshyna (bottom row, third from right) at the *Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment* workshop conducted by Pact. July 2023.



Representatives of the *Association for Community Self-Organization Assistance* at the Central Cluster Community of Practice. June 2023.

“Thanks to Superpower, we did our homework on strengthening our capacity. This helped us to remain operational and effective during a full-scale war. And this is very important. After all, our defenders are fighting for us [at the front], and we are fighting for them here as a civil society. We understand that women's organizations should already be doing preparatory work for Ukraine's recovery after the victory – strengthening civil society, advocating for social services commissioning and social entrepreneurship,” says Alla.



Western Cluster

The Western Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of local women’s rights organizations (WROs) is the *Women’s Perspective Center*. As of December 31, 2023, the Western Cluster included the following WROs:

- *Avenir WRO*;
- *TMGK ‘Vidrozhennia Natsii’ WRO*;
- *Gender Creative Space WRO*;
- *Diie. Dobri idei ednayut WRO*;
- *D.O.M.48.24 WRO*;
- *Doulas-Lviv WRO*;
- *Women’s Hub WRO*;
- *Zonta Club WRO*;
- *Steps to the Future WRO*;
- *Modern Women’s League WRO*;
- *We are Equal WRO*;
- *Na-Diya WRO*;
- *Parity WRO*;
- *Natural Rights – Ukraine WRO*;
- *Family Space WRO*;
- *Rural women of Ukraine WRO*;
- *Feminism UA WRO*;
- *Feminist Studio WRO*;
- *Mediation and Dialogue center WRO*;
- *Equal Opportunities Center WRO*; and
- *Center for support of civic initiatives ‘Chaika’ WRO*.

Uniting Efforts: A story from ‘Women’s Perspective’ Center WRO, Western interregional Hub for capacity building of local WROs

Women’s Perspective Center is one of the WoU Hubs for capacity building serving 16 local organizations from the regions in the Western Cluster. The Hub receives support from Pact and, in turn, the organization develops the capacity of local WROs to protect the rights and empower women in their communities.

Founded in 1998, the organization is small, but mighty. With 13 employees, it works to build equal rights for women in all areas of life. Its efforts include gender policy work, combating domestic violence, building women’s competitiveness in the labor market and increasing women’s participation in decision-making processes.



Western Cluster Monitoring and Evaluation Training. February 24, 2022.

Full-scale war

When Russia attacked Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Iryna Trokhym, Women’s Perspective Center Project Manager, and her colleagues were holding a three-day training on monitoring and evaluation



in Lviv for women’s rights organizations from across the country’s western regions. Sixteen participants had just arrived in Lviv when shelling began across the country.



Iryna Trokhym (at left) at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

Of the 16 organizational leaders who had traveled to Lviv for the training, only three – those with children or other urgent needs at home – decided to leave. The rest stayed and, with support from Women’s Perspective Center, began working together to figure out how to respond to the needs of their communities and IDPs amid war.

“Serving IDPs became an immediate need. So we responded,” says Iryna Trokhym.

Across the country, with Pact’s support, other *WoU* partners responded the same way. Two days after the invasion began, Pact’s team in Ukraine gathered

local partners for a call, urging them to replan their work to provide humanitarian assistance, if they felt they could. Pact coordinated with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) to quickly reallocate funding for humanitarian needs, and Pact is continuing to replan and adapt to serve internally displaced women and children and women serving in the army. Pact’s partners are helping to provide shelter, food, medical services, psychosocial support, and more.

More than 7.7 million Ukrainians were internally displaced during the first months of the full-scale war, with another 5.7 million fleeing to neighboring countries as refugees.



“We are very grateful to GAC for their flexibility and prompt response to the humanitarian crisis caused by Russia’s military invasion. This flexibility allowed Pact to pivot from traditional development work to humanitarian aid which was so needed while traditional humanitarian actors were not yet fully operational. We also admire our partners, local WROs, who took up the role of humanitarian aid organizations – not hesitating for a minute. They were there on the ground and they responded immediately for those in need,” says Alyona Gerasimova, Country Director of Pact Ukraine.

Fast response

Women’s Perspective Center has provided assistance for hundreds of IDPs. They created a shelter for women and children in Lviv, working with local business owners to repurpose office space as temporary housing. The shelter was located near Lviv’s rail station, offering women and children a convenient place to stay during layovers before continuing abroad to Poland, Romania, or Moldova and onwards. The organization’s staff and volunteers meet IDPs at the station and help them to the shelter, where they were able to eat, bathe and recover. In addition to medical services, the shelter offered psychological support and art therapy for children. Those who want to stay in Ukraine were later offered longer-term housing in Western Ukraine. Those wishing to leave the country were supported with transfers to do so and, when possible, accommodations abroad.



Head of *Women’s Perspectives Center*, Liubov Maksymovych, in a shelter with IDPs. Spring 2022.



With support from Pact, *Women’s Perspective Center* was able to provide hygiene items, bedclothes, dishes and medicine. The organization’s lawyer gathered documentation for an international tribunal on Russian war crimes, and the *Center* has worked with international journalists covering the war. The *Center* also pivoted its programming and started working to help displaced women gain economic opportunities.

To continue the core activities and effectively help communities

Critically, the organization also continues to support its partner women’s rights organizations. They have resumed regular meetings, with *Women’s Perspective Center* providing advice, mentorship and funding as the partners have established shelters and aid centers of their own across the west.



Organizations of the Western Cluster at the Personnel and Process Management training. September 2023.

“Some of the organizations struggled at first,” Trokhym says. *“But all together we figured out how to efficiently help communities. During our weekly meetings we continue to consult with the organizations, because not all of them have experience responding to such challenges. They also help each other and share best practice. We also try to take care of the organizations themselves, offering advice to prevent burnout.”*

Some of the organizations are running out of resources, so *Women’s Perspective Center* is reaching out to potential donors and mentoring partners as they look for additional funding.

Trokhym acknowledges how difficult this period has been, but seeing communities come together to help each other in every way needed has kept her going. *“From the first days of the war, everyone has been involved,”* she says.

Becoming a powerful agent of impact: A story from Center for Support of Civic Initiatives ‘Chaika’ WRO

When Larysa Hunko founded her WRO in 2001, she decided to name it Chaika, meaning ‘seagull’ in Ukrainian. *“Many people thought it was in honor of the then mayor of Rivne with the same name,”* Larysa jokingly says, *“but of course, the reasons were quite different. First, there were two Lar-ysa’s on the team at the time, and in ancient Greek this name means “seagull”. Secondly, the image of a free and strong bird symbolized the goals of the organization very well. After all, the organization should protect the rights of vulnerable people, in particular women, and empower them”*.



Representatives of the Center for Support of Civic Initiatives ‘Chaika’ at the Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context forum. March 2023.



Focus on rural women



Larysa Hunko (bottom right) at a training on stress prevention conducted by the Western Hub for cluster organizations. August 2022.

When *Chaika* joined the *Superpower* program in 2020, it had been working in the public sector in Rivne region for 18 years and had implemented dozens of projects, including to address domestic violence and human trafficking. However, it was always looking for opportunities to expand its range of support for vulnerable groups. *“The project supported by the WoU – In Defense of the Rights of Women and Girls from Rural Areas – gave us the opportunity to work with rural women, which we had long wanted to do,”* says Larysa. As part of the project, 80 women from 11 rural communities in Rivne region were trained on the prevention of

domestic and gender-based violence and providing assistance to victims. The results of the project far exceeded what had been planned. *WoU* also supported the organization’s next project, Violence-Free Community, aimed at improving practices for responding to cases of violence, which, targeted representatives of local authorities and social services.



“Thanks to these two projects with the WoU project, we have not only expanded our activities but also strengthened our impact within the community,” says Larysa. *“For example, members of the organization have joined several advisory bodies on preventing violence and gender equality at the regional level and now offer solutions and influence the agenda themselves”.*

A nudge to development

Cooperation with *WoU* came with some new obligations for the organization, according to Larysa. *“In order to meet the high requirements, we had to finalize some of our documents and internal policies, something we hadn’t done before.”* Participation in *Superpower* and work with the coordinators of the Western Hub at the *Women’s Perspective Center*, helped the organization significantly. *“My team and I tried not to miss a single training, a single meeting with the mentors, because they were extremely helpful!”*

Through cooperation with *WoU*, the organization, according to its leader, improved its policies, created a development strategy, and *“for the first time used evaluation and monitoring in it”* to measure and understand what results the organization achieved and what it failed to achieve.



“In just two years of cooperation with WoU, the capacity of our organization has grown significantly,” Larysa concludes.

Coalition drive

By actively communicating with other organizations at trainings and seminars as part of the *Superpower* program, *Chaika* received a good start to networking and implementing joint projects. *“We had previously been in contact with many organizations in Ukraine and participated in partnership*



Larysa Hunko (at right) at the Outcome Harvesting Methodology in Project Result Assessment workshop conducted by Pact. July 2023.

initiatives, but it was Superpower that encouraged us to work in coalitions.”

For example, in 2022, *Chaika*, along with other organizations, joined a new project implemented by Pact with the support of the Government of the United Kingdom (UK), *Women Leading Response and Recovery in Ukraine*. The project was aimed at increasing the capacity of local WROs and strengthening their role in responding to the challenges of the war and the country’s recovery process . The project was the first time the team tried to work with local community coordinators who were mostly women from rural areas. *“And it was a real breakthrough!”* Larysa adds, *“First, we gained like-minded and qualified local assistants, and second, through them we greatly increased our influence on local policies and the promotion of a gender-sensitive approach.”*

Together we are strong

When Pact held the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum for WROs in March 2023, *Chaika* suggested that the local coordinators with whom the organization worked should also be invited to the event. *“We are very grateful that Pact agreed,”* says Larysa. *“Our coordinators saw the full scale of the women’s movement, heard the issues of women’s organizations, and were so inspired that when we returned home, we all came up with the idea of a new coalition project for local WROs.”* As a result, four organizations from Rivne region joined the coalition, and *Chaika* became its leader. The project was soon supported by *WoU* through a subgrant. The organization is also implementing another coalition project to improve community safety together with the *Gender Creative Space* WRO, also a participant of the *Superpower* program.



Larysa Hunko at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.



Larysa Hunko notes: *“One of the most important lessons we have learned from *WoU* is that we can significantly increase our impact in communities and make greater changes by bringing together WROs, their experience and resources. So now we know that we are on the right track!”*

From a young organization to a coalition leader in three years: A story from Gender Creative Space WRO

The Gender Creative Space WRO was founded in 2020 by five women. Three of them: Halyna Yerko, Larysa Konstankevych, and Svitlana Virsta are teachers at Lutsk Pedagogical College; Natalia Dmytruk is a researcher from Kyiv; and Halyna Berezhna is from Zaporizhzhia. Each of them researched gender issues in her own field and they met at gender studies in Kyiv. “In fact, the organization was founded on the basis of the Center for Gender Education, which has existed since 2012 at the Lutsk Pedagogical College,” says Halyna Yerko, Chair of Gender Creative Space’s Board. “At some point, we simply decided that a WRO has much more opportunities and influence. In addition, thanks to members from two other cities, we could cover a wider geography for our activities,” adds Natalia Dmytruk, the organization’s Project Manager and Deputy Chair of the Board.



Members of the organization Halyna Berezhna, Natalia Dmytruk, and Halyna Yerko together with the head of *We are Equal* at the Civil Society Forum. November 2021.

Internal Insights

The organization was only a few months old when, in 2020, Halyna noticed the *Superpower* for WROs program within the *WoU* project. “Although each of us was already a gender expert with experience, the organization itself was new,” explains Halyna, “so everything that *Superpower* offered on capacity development, strategy, and networking was extremely useful for us!”

“Thanks to *Pact*, we understood what the ‘internal kitchen’ of the organization should look like and began to actively organize it in our organization,” adds Natalia.

The first project

In 2021, the team received funding from *WoU* for a project to build a gender-sensitive educational environment in communities in the Volyn region. This was the organization’s first independent project, and for Halyna, it was her first experience in project management in a WRO. “It really helped that *Pact* set very clear rules and requirements for both project implementation and reporting. It really structured our work!” says Halyna.



Regional workshop on grant project results. September 2021.

During the project, eight educational institutions were audited and a joint roadmap for the implementation of the gender component in educational institutions in the region was prepared. “But I think our most important result is that educational institutions, particularly in rural communities, have become interested in gender equality and have expressed their willingness to work on it,” Halyna says.

Leadership challenges

According to Natalia, the organization could have continued to focus on education projects, but the



Natalia Dmytruk (second from left) at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

team decided to broaden their scope. They attended additional workshops held by Pact and began cooperating with other organizations within the Western Cluster. Following discussions with, the idea of a coalition project to develop women’s economic empowerment in the Western region was born, which was later supported by Pact. *“We weren’t the most experienced in the coalition, but after trainings with the WoU project we felt strong, so we took a chance and became the coalition’s leader,”* says Natalia, who became the project manager. *“None of the team members imagined how many challenges it would bring.”*

In January 2022, the coalition project was launched, and a month later, the full-scale war began. With the support of Pact, the project had to be quickly restructured to provide humanitarian assistance to IDP women and children who had arrived in the Western regions. *“The funding was not big, and the needs were many and different,”* Natalia recalls, *“and that’s when the adaptive management skills I learned at the Pact training proved to be very useful!”* Through targeted allocation of resources and clear coordination, partner organizations on the ground supported the work of six volunteer centers and shelters, organized assistance to military personnel and volunteer teams, and held dozens of events for IDP children. In total, about 1,500 IDP families received humanitarian aid.



Halyna Berezhna (at right) during a meeting of *Superpower* partners. December 2021.

Despite the intense humanitarian activities, at the last phase of the project, the organization was able to realize its initial goals: developing applications for monitoring local development programs, considering the economic needs of women, and preparing programs for women’s business development in two communities. *“A coalition project in a time of war was difficult!”* Natalia summarizes. *“But it gave us invaluable experience: we learned to listen to our partners, interact and achieve our goals despite everything!”*



Training on “Learning to be Safe” within the coalition project “Women’s Organizations’ Response to Security Challenges and Advocacy for the Localization of the NAP 1325”.

Today, as a leader, *Gender Creative Space* is implementing another WoU coalition project on women’s organizations’ response to security challenges and is part of a coalition project to improve the level of medical and psychosocial services for women from vulnerable groups. Pact’s project *Women Leading Response and Recovery in Ukraine*, implemented with the support of the UK Government – as well as several projects supported by other international and Ukrainian foundations, are also in the portfolio of the organization.



“In fact, in three years we have grown tremendously as an organization,” says Halyna, “and we have grown together with the WoU project. Our trainings at Superpower and the experience of coalition projects with Pact have created such a strong ‘shell’ for the WRO, which we will now strengthen and develop!”

“Speak out loud”: A story from *Diie. Dobri idei ednayut WRO (Good Ideas Unite)*

How a WRO can choose the right direction and be heard

“When three Marias get together, something will definitely come of it!” After meeting in 2018, Maria Lutsak, Maria Kozmenko, and Maria Yavdoszniak, created their own WRO. They were mothers after maternity leave, and each of them was facing the question of further work and self-realization. Based on their own experience, they correctly assumed that other women in the community were facing similar problems and needed help. That’s how the first projects on women’s personal development, social entrepreneurship, English language courses, and a film club for young people were born.

“Back then, we were a very young organization that grabbed all the projects,” says Maria Lutsak, the head of the organization. *In other words, we did not have a general strategy for the organization. And over time, we realized that we couldn’t go on like this.”*

After hearing about the *Superpower* for WROs program, the team decided that it was a gift for their organization, and they had to apply immediately. In addition, *Women’s Perspective Center* turned out to be the Hub in the Western Cluster.



Maria (second from left) at the *WenDo* training from the Western Hub. June 2023.



“And we had already met them at various events and really admired them as public activists and leaders.”



As Maria Lutsak notes, every training or seminar at *Superpower* just “fell into fertile ground”: “I can’t even say which one was not relevant or useful to us. All of them were useful!” For example, the training on process management helped Maria, as the head of the organization, to understand management of the organization. “I realized the mistakes I made systematically and now I can correct them so that my team and I can work more efficiently.”

The principle of selection

The organization’s team developed several policies and procedures and started to develop a communications strategy. “We began to structure the organization and cut out all the unnecessary things that could prevent its development.” At the same time, the organization has always been able to count on the help and support of the Western Hub. “To be honest, I used it a lot,” Maria Lutsak jokingly admits, “I was always calling our coordinator Iryna Trokhym to discuss an idea or a project application. And we always received professional advice and feedback, for which we are extremely grateful to our Hub!”

As a result, the organization was able to solve its most pressing problem – to determine the organization’s direction. “As our coordinator told us, it’s impossible to help everyone at once – you need to identify the target groups with which the organization will work,” Maria Lutsak explained. The team carefully identified and described their target audiences and developed a strategic development plan. “In this way, we learned to be selective: if this area is not in the strategic plan, then we don’t work on it. We also try to make sure that our projects are a logical continuation of each other.”

Crisis management

One of the areas of work for the organization is to enhance the economic empowerment of women and girls. This was the goal of a coalition project supported by *WoU* which *Diie. Dobri idei ednayut* joined, partnering with three other women’s organizations. However, a month after the start, a full-scale war began, and the project was redirected to provide humanitarian aid for IDP women. “We were lucky to have a more experienced organization in the coalition [*Gender Creative Space*]: it very quickly and clearly distributed tasks, and we were able to work even in the chaos of the first months” Maria Lutsak recalled. *Diie. Dobri idei ednayut* helped to set up a volunteer center in the Pechenizhyn community, provided humanitarian aid to IDP women and families, and organized several events for IDP children.



“And of course, we tried to learn crisis management, even under such stressful conditions,” adds Maria.

Engagement strategy

In August 2022, the organization felt strong enough to launch its own project with the support of *WoU*. It was to promote self-employment of women in the Pechenizhyn community, including IDP women, and to advocate for a concrete action plan to increase women’s economic empowerment in local communities. “We had previously analyzed that there is a great demand for women’s entrepreneurship in our community,” claims the head of the organization, “but we were not sure how our initiatives would



be accepted by the target audience. Our community is rural and traditional. But, we were not sure how



Events within the *Women of Ukraine* subgrant project. September 2023.

our initiatives would be accepted by the target audience. It's not common to talk about your business out loud, especially for women." However, slowly, with each event, more women joined the project. "This means that we, in consultation with the Hub, have prepared the right engagement strategy. I think IDP women also had an impact, bringing more openness and activity to our community." Results included more than 80 women taking part in events, a large hackathon on women's entrepreneurship being held, ten business ideas developed, and an action plan and changes to the targeted programs of the territorial community being prepared. "So far,

we haven't gotten our village council to approve the Action Plan, but I'm sure we'll see it through," says Maria, "because this project has inspired us greatly, made us realize that we are moving in the right direction and meeting the needs of our women."

Vector for development

Today, the organization continues implementing projects to support women's economic empowerment and women's initiatives. In June 2023, a coalition project supported by *WoU* to promote women's entrepreneurship was launched. *Diie. Dobri idei ednayut* is one of the partners. The project has conducted a training on creating a business plan, started individual consultations with women, and will soon open a sewing coworking space.



"Now we are a self-sufficient organization that has strengthened its capacity and can implement large-scale and impactful projects, and this is a great credit to Superpower and Pact. Thanks to the program, we have gained access to knowledge that many young WROs in Ukraine, unfortunately, do not have. And we would like to see this project continue!"

"For us and with us": A story from *Parity Zhytomyr* regional youth WRO

How to create a vision of the future in wartime

In 2012, Natalia Tarasenko was in charge of volunteering at the *Center for Gender Education* at Zhytomyr University. It was mainly educational work. At the same time, she and like-minded people realized that, in order to more effectively help women, they needed their own WRO. This is how *Parity* was founded, focusing on the rights of women and girls and gender equality.

Encouragement to move forward



The Parity team.

In its first years, *Parity* implemented dozens of projects on legal and psychological support for women and girls, women’s leadership, and advocacy for gender-sensitive policies in local government. The organization’s members grew to become experts and trainers. When the organization was awarded the ‘*With and For Girls*’ global prize in 2016 for its contribution to working with girls, they decided to allocate part of the funds for organizational development. “*We already realized that this was very important for the sustainability of our organization.*”

We managed to develop several policies and write out a strategy, but due to the large number of projects, we had to postpone it.” Therefore, Natalia says, the team viewed participation in the *Superpower* for WROs program as a new motivation to further strengthen the organization. “*And when we saw the scale of this project, we wanted to join a sisterhood, to build a network with other women’s organizations in Ukraine,*” adds the leader of the organization.

In response to the needs

“*Superpower gave us the opportunity to analyze our strengths and weaknesses,*” says Natalia. Although the organization already had experience in capacity development, the team members tried to join all the trainings within the program and events organized by the Western Hub – *Women’s Perspective Center* – and Pact. “*I am grateful that we were always heard, so that the trainings met the needs of the organization. The same applies to consultations and mentoring: the Hub has always met our needs.*” For example, in response to Natalia’s request, the Western Hub organized a training for organization leaders on effective management and building effective teams.

During its participation in *Superpower*, the organization’s team developed policies and procedures related to financial reporting, conflict of interest, and gender equality. They also began to make changes to their core activities.



Natalia Tarasenko (at right) at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.



Participants of the *Picnic for Mothers with Many Children*. June 2022.

In addition, some trainings gave the organization a nudge to launch new initiatives. For example, after a training on human-centered design, the organization proposed a project to support mothers with many children, which was later supported by *WoU*. Before starting, the team thoroughly researched

the needs and requests of this target group and developed a range of activities for mothers to provide psychological support, improve financial literacy, and provide personal growth counseling.

Despite the challenges of war

The project was already being successfully implemented when Russia began its full-scale war in Ukraine. Natalia and her team were forced to put their ideas for the project on hold. But, after a couple of months, they decided to conduct a survey among mothers with many children again, and it turned



Natalia Tarasenko (at right) at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

out that the need for support had only increased. So the organization, despite all the difficulties of wartime, continued to work. They even managed to involve mothers who had relocated abroad with their children because of the war. As a result, more than 250 women received training and knowledge, psychological assistance and, according to many participants, regained the strength to live on and take care of their children.

Another coalition project which *Parity* implemented within *WoU* was also threatened by the war. It was aimed at creating safe spaces for women in the communities of three regions and was supposed to

be implemented together with two other organizations that were also members of *Superpower*. But, after February 2022, the issue of security took on a different dimension. Together with *Pact*, it was decided to reshape the project to provide humanitarian assistance to women affected by the war. As the leader of the coalition, *Parity* coordinated the transportation and distribution of humanitarian aid and organized psychological support for women in vulnerable groups. Together, they managed to reach nearly 3,000 women and their families with aid and provide about 100 psychological counseling sessions.



“We were so eager to have experience of working with other women’s organizations when we joined Superpower, and we did, but it was in a war context,” says Natalia, *“But we quickly learned how to coordinate our work, support each other and achieve results despite the challenges.”*

Life goes on

“Thanks to the fact that we continued to work with Pact after the full-scale invasion, we actually saved the organization and did not lose our potential,” says the organization’s leader. *“Imagine, three children have been born in our organization since the beginning of the full-scale war! And we took it as a sign that life goes on and requires our active participation.”*

Today, *Parity* is implementing several coalition projects with the support of international organizations (including the United Nations Population Fund) and continues to focus on vulnerable women, as well as mothers and children living abroad. For these individuals, the organization has organized courses on studying English and employment skills, and provides legal and psychological counseling. *“Because if we want to bring women and children back home, if we want Ukraine to be successful, we must create the conditions for this now.”*



Giving new life to an organization: A story from *TMGK* ‘*Vidrozhennia Natsii*’ WRO

“Do you know what we needed as of 2020? We needed a good shake!” jokingly says Halyna Kravets, head of the Ternopil-based *Vidrozhennia Natsii* (Revival of the Nation) WRO. *“Because, to be honest, the organization had become very relaxed and stagnant at that time.”*

The organization, founded in 1998 as a city women’s club, started by supporting women who had suffered from domestic violence. Later, it added anti-trafficking and work with victims. Their hotline, organized in 2006, has helped hundreds of victims of violence and human trafficking over the years. *“Thanks to cooperation with international organizations such as La Strada, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the United Nations’s International Organization for Migration, we have developed in these areas and had many projects implemented,”* says Halyna. *“But, working in one sector and having a constant partnership is very comforting. I realized that we needed to move on and we needed a good driver. That’s why we immediately applied for the Superpower for WROs program as soon as we learned about it.”*



The *Vidrozhennia Natsii* team.

Analyze the experience

According to the head of the organization, they had to be active immediately. *“There were so many trainings in the Superpower program, and they were all very interesting! It’s good that we are a big organization with 20 members, so someone always participated in the training and then shared the knowledge with others.”*

“Even though the topics were familiar to us,” Halyna continues, *“we were able to structure our experience. We revised a lot of things or even developed them from scratch.”* The organization updated some policies, revised its development strategy, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation principles. After the communications training, *Vidrozhennia Natsii* started developing a communications strategy. *“This has always been our weak spot. So, with the help of our Hub, Women’s Perspective*

Center, we developed a detailed strategy and a communication plan and began to implement them. Now we have an updated website, we are active on social media and have become more visible to the media.”



Halyna (at center) at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

Halyna also emphasizes the cooperation with the Western Hub: *“The coordinators from Women’s Perspective have become real mentors and coaches for us. They helped us with any issue we came to them with. The fact that we now have a whole package of policies for the organization is also their credit.”*



Exploring a new area

The Hub also advised the organization in the development of a new project on addressing domestic and gender-based violence (GBV) which began cooperating with Pact in 2021. *“Through the Superpower program, we attended the training ‘Providing Social and Psychological Assistance to Victims of Domestic and/or Gender-Based Violence’ and decided to add this new aspect to our work with domestic violence,”* says Halyna. The project included an advocacy component and was aimed at improving local policies and algorithms for addressing violence in nine communities in the Ternopil region. As a result, the organization managed to achieve significant results, including: interdisciplinary groups to fight violence created in four communities, mobile response teams created in four more, prevention and response programs approved in several communities, and 220 publications featuring the project’s activities.



“But it’s not even the numbers that make us happy,” Halyna comments, *“it’s the fact that we managed to introduce the concept of GBV in our communities and draw attention to this issue.”*

Restoring resources

Vidrozhenia Natsii was preparing to launch a project with *Na-Diya* WRO, another member of *Superpower*, to support the development of local women’s and girls’ socio-economic standing through local socio-economic development programs. However, due to Russia’s full-scale war, both organizations pivoted to providing humanitarian assistance to IDPs, supported volunteer centers and shelters for displaced persons.



“It was not easy, because we had to coordinate our work urgently. But, there was no other way out, and we managed it,” says Halyna.

Since the beginning of the full-scale war, the organization has also continued to operate a hotline, only now it has been directed to help war victims. *“People called from the occupation, from the war zone – every day our counselors on the line faced streams of grief and tears, and they began to emotionally break down,”* says Halyna. It was then, she says, that the webinars and trainings on psychological support and resource recovery organized by the Hub as part of *Superpower* were a critical resource. *“They helped us regain our strength and be effective in helping people.”*

Scaling up goals

“We were lucky that after Superpower program and our projects [implemented with Pact] we were much stronger organizationally; we added a new area of work and had a new good partner when the full-scale war began,” says Halyna.

In August 2022, *Vidrozhenia Natsii* joined a large-scale UK Government-funded Pact’s project, *Women Leading Response and Recovery in Ukraine*, which aimed to strengthen local women’s organizations to provide a gender-sensitive response to the challenges of war and recovery in communities. As part of the project, the organization specifically engaged active IDP women in interacting with local governments and forming initiative groups to help IDP women and other vulnerable groups. At the same time,



Valentyna Lymar (at left) of Vidrozhennia Natsii at the Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context forum. March 2023.

they tried to join efforts with local women. *“I am very happy that the IDP leaders have actually energized our local women, and inspired them,”* says Halyna. *“We now have several initiative groups, and with our help, two of them have already become WROs. And we are happy to provide them with mentoring and support.”*

According to Halyna, the organization now finds great satisfaction in the fact that, in addition to specific projects to support women, it is actively involved in the development of the women’s movement in the Ternopil region. *“We are sincerely grateful to Pact for giving us the resources to be*

mentors for young organizations. We see this as our new vector of development - to become a powerful resource center, possibly a hub, and to strengthen women’s activism in Ukraine.”

Bravery to be a leader (and what else is needed): A story from *Equal Opportunities Center WRO*

“When a person is active, he or she will be active in any circumstances,” says Lesia Klymiuk, founder and head of the *Equal Opportunities Center*. Lesia has been an activist in her community since high school, then at university, and after having two children, she headed the *Youth Council of the Starobohorodchany community* in Ivano-Frankivsk region. She had a lot of ideas, but needed resources to implement them. In 2018, Lesia and like-minded people founded a WRO focused on women and youth, categories that were not given much attention in the community at the time.

By 2020, the active young organization had already implemented 20 projects aimed at youth development, supporting women’s entrepreneurship and leadership, and opened a youth space and an anti-cafe in the community. *“We wanted to grow, to motivate more and more women in the region,”* says Lesia, *“but, we were aware that to do so, we needed to develop our organization and partner with other women’s and feminist organizations in the country. So when Pact’s Superpower for WROs program appeared, “we didn’t hesitate to apply.”*



Head of *Equal Opportunities Center*, Lesia Klymiuk.

A code of development

The team was especially active in trainings during 2020-2021. *“During this period, we twice conducted assessment of our capacity using a special toolkit called the ITOCA and this allowed us to clearly see our [strengths and] gaps,”* Lesia notes. Through *Superpower*, the organization started working on differentiating funding sources and improved its procurement policy. With the assistance of the



Diana Torkoniak, a member of Equal Opportunities Center, participating in the Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context forum. March 2023.

Western Hub, it created a development strategy and an operational plan for the organization. *“Our latest achievement, which we finalized as part of the program, is an equality code, which helps us a lot to promote the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination in our work.”*

The knowledge the team gained during the program also influenced its project activities. *“We were able to apply new forms and methods of work in our future projects, we increased the target audience – we added women from vulnerable groups and IDPs, and, accordingly, we expanded the scope of services,”* comments Lesia.

The Secret of Efficiency

But, there was another result that the organization’s team was very pleased with. *“We started cooperating with Pact as subgrantees, which is something we have long dreamed of,”* says Lesia. However, before that, the organization had to survive the first months of full-scale war.

Dozens of IDPs came to the Starobohorodchany community every day, and the organization’s team focused all its efforts on humanitarian aid, logistics, and meeting the needs of people affected by the war. *“We slept 2-3 hours a night,”* says Lesia. *“We equipped the shelters with everything they needed: from pillows and blankets to refrigerators and microwaves, helped find doctors, lawyers, veterinarians, even cooked canned food and buns with cherries!”* In fact, the organization took on the main responsibility for working with IDPs in the community. *“We survived,”* Lesia summarizes, *“because we were able to mobilize quickly, be flexible and allocate resources. We learned many of these skills at Superpower.”*



Equal Opportunities Center members in training within the coalition project. September 2023.

Over time, the organization shifted to more systematic support for IDPs, and introduced several initiatives with the assistance of international funds to integrate and socialize IDPs.



“In 2022, we implemented 11 projects, which means that we proved to be effective and efficient even in the context of war,” says the head of the organization.

Leadership practices

Since 2023, the organization has returned to one of its primary areas of work - supporting women’s entrepreneurship and employment. Considering the needs of IDP women in Ukraine, an issue since 2014, has become more critical as nearly one quarter of the population experienced displacement during the full-scale war. In January this year, a large coalition project aimed at strengthening women’s



economic empowerment was supported by WoU. “We had the courage to take a leading role in the project because we recognized the capacity of our organization,” Lesia notes. Two organizations (from Burshtyn and Kolomyia) are partners of *Equal Opportunities Center* in the coalition project which is being implemented in six communities in the Ivano-Frankivsk region. “In a sense, implementing a coalition project is more difficult because we need to coordinate many things with our partners. In addition, we, as the leading organization, take the main responsibility – we distribute funds, report, organize trainings.” However, Lesia analyzes, partner organizations bring their experience, promote the project on the ground, and thus increase its impact. For example, thanks to the activity of local women leaders, the project has suggested changes to four socio-economic development programs, fostered changes for approval at local council meetings, and designed gender-sensitive development programs for two communities. The project also actively engages representatives of partner organizations as trainers. “For example, our trainer from Burshtyn has a lot of experience as a consultant on starting a business - more than 20 registered businesses, including those run by women. So, she shares her experience by region, and it is very useful and practical for our participants.”

The project is now continuing trainings for women and conducting an information campaign to show all the benefits of promoting women’s entrepreneurship. Lesia says the benefits of the project for the organization itself are obvious.



“With the support of Pact, we are able to network with other WROs, engage more women, and at the same time grow as a leading organization, which means we are moving towards our strategic goals!”

First among equals; from volunteering to the first WRO in Sumy region: A story from *Modern Women’s League* WRO

The co-founders of the *Modern Women’s League* WRO, Olha Poliakova and Liudmyla Ponomarenko, taught at Sumy Pedagogical University for a long time. But, when they started lecturing on social work, they both realized that they could not do so effectively without practical experience. They began to volunteer with the *Sumy City Center for Social Services*, first at foster parenting courses, and later as family counselors, advising on protection from domestic violence and child support. Olha and Liudmyla were amazed by the large number of women who came to them and needed help, and there was no organization in the community that specifically addressed protection of women’s and girls’ rights. Consequently, Olha and Liudmyla founded *Modern Women’s League*, the first WRO in Sumy region, in 2019.



The Modern Women’s League team.

New knowledge

“We did not enter the public sector by probing,” says Olha, the head of the organization, *“we already had experience in social work, methodology, and ambitious plans. But, we had no financial support.”* Therefore, when *Modern Women’s League* was selected for Pact’s *Superpower for WROs* program, they hoped to gain skills in resource mobilization and start working as soon as possible. Instead, they found themselves mastering a whole new skill set. According to Olha, during Pact’s trainings and consultations with the Hub, *“a lot of attention was paid to the development of the organization’s internal policies – financial, procurement, and development strategies.”*

“At first, we even made some complaints,” Olha jokingly admits, *“because it took a lot of time. But, very soon we realized how important it was!”*

Inspired by the training in human-centered design, the organization’s team developed a project to prevent cybercrime among children, with a special focus on teenage girls. And this project received funding from the United States Embassy.



“That is, from the first attempt, we gained solid support – I believe it was because we had clearly defined policies and a clear vision for the organization,” concludes Olha.

Successful advocacy

In 2021, *Modern Women’s League* launched the “Sumy – a City Safe for Women and Girls” project with the support of *WoU*. Its goal was to advocate for the creation of a shelter in Sumy for women victims of domestic and gender-based violence, as this issue had not been addressed in the community for a long time. In working with government officials, the team relied on a mutually beneficial approach, an advocacy principle learned during *WoU* trainings. *“We did not put pressure, did not give ultimatums,*



Advocacy event for the newly elected deputies of the Sumy City Council on the opening of a shelter.

but tried to find compromises with those on whom decision-making depended,” explains Olha. The project’s implementers attended deputy sessions, organized working meetings with deputies, and conducted a large-scale information campaign in the community – and it worked! The city authorities approved the creation of the shelter, a clear roadmap of actions for the opening and operation of the institution was also developed. The organization’s head, Olha Poliakova, joined the working group on establishing the shelter. However, the full-scale war prevented the realization of the plan.

As part of a coalition project, *Modern Women’s League* quickly joined in coordinating the provision of humanitarian aid to women and children affected by the war and provided psychological counseling to IDP women. *“It was a difficult, stressful experience. But we learned how to quickly mobilize resources and cooperate with other organizations,”* says Olha.



A Women’s Space

After a few months, the organization returned to its main activities. Although the creation of a shelter as a municipal institution has not yet taken place, *Modern Women’s League*, with the support of an international foundation, opened a *Safe Space for Women and Girls* in Sumy, which provides psychological and legal assistance to victims of domestic violence. Later, a *Children’s Space* was opened, where the organization’s specialists conduct various activities with children. With the support of Ukrainian and international foundations, the organization has also implemented several projects on cybersecurity for adolescents, domestic violence prevention, and children’s mental health recovery. Throughout this evolution of the organization’s programming, Superpower mentors were there to counsel on project implementation, when needed.



Liudmyla Ponomarenko of *Modern Women’s League* (second from right) during a meeting of *Superpower* partners. December 2021.

According to Olha, in just four years, *Modern Women’s League* has become an influential WRO in Sumy region.



“Our experts are members of working groups on gender and family policy at the city and regional councils and share their expertise with other NGOs.”

The organization’s team continues to learn and develop the organization all the time. “My colleagues and I are happy to participate in *Pact* seminars or trainings because we know very well what an impact *Pact* has on the development of the organization and women’s activism in general,” says Olha. “We don’t want to lose this.”

Strengthening your capacity and bringing change to your community: A story from *Women’s Hub* WRO

How to become Superpowered

For Viktoriya Parkhomets and Kateryna Gidzula, co-founders of the *Women’s Hub*, it all started with activism. In 2019, they decided to create a public organization to offer opportunities for self-realization and better living conditions for women in the Khmelnytsky area. Soon after, the *Women’s Hub* joined the *Superpower* program and received the support they needed.

As a new organization, the *Women’s Hub* many questions about resource mobilization, development of project proposals and financial management. *WoU* support enabled the organization to develop policies, learn how to use their resources in a more efficient way, and win its first grant.



“We have worked our way from a young organization looking for advice to an organization whose opinion is valued and reckoned with,” says Co-Founder Viktoriya Parkhomets.



Members of Women's Hub during a mentoring visit by the Pact team. December 2022.

Meetings that other *Superpower* organizations held also helped *Women's Hub* to develop. Such networking and interaction, exchange of experience and advice made it possible to avoid common mistakes. Now, *Women's Hub* plans to sign a memorandum of cooperation with the *Gender Creative Space WRO*, another *Superpower* member.

“At present, our organization has already earned a reputation. We interact with local authorities. They want to engage us in socially important events. Would it have been possible without Superpower? Probably not,” says Kateryna Gidzula.

Accessible preschool education for internally displaced children in Khmelnytsky

In January 2022, *Women's Hub*, acting as a part of a coalition with other organizations, was awarded a grant by *WoU* to expand the economic opportunities of women in the Khmelnytsky and Ternopil areas. After the full-scale war broke out, grants were reoriented to respond to a humanitarian crisis. For example, *Women's Hub* began to implement the *Free Mom* service in Khmelnytsky – groups that provided four-hour care for children of preschool and elementary school age after seeing that women with young children faced difficulties obtaining documents and finding a place to live. The service made it possible for mothers to leave their children for several hours with experienced educators and psychologists, and to have time to do what they needed to do.



Viktoriia and Kateryna (at right) at the training “Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Civil Society Organizations” conducted by the Western Hub. November 2022.



Kateryna Gidzula and Viktoriya Parkhomets at a poster presentation at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

Later, the organization received several more grants from another donor to continue that service. This enabled *Free Mom* to function in three locations. But, it brought about the issue of sustainability.

“The Free Mom service terminated its operation once a project ended. But, the need for it exists all the time. That’s why, at the community level, we had to advocate for the creation of such services that would function on a permanent basis,” says Viktoriya Parkhomets. In its next project with *WoU*, the organization focused on advocating for lasting services for as many women as possible.



The *Free Mom* service at the Khmelnytsky Region Library for children.

That is why, in its next project with *WoU*, the organization focused on advocating for lasting services for as many women as possible.

Over five months, *Women’s Hub* analyzed the condition of the preschool education system, interviewed 173 mothers with young children, formed a working group and held meetings with City Council Deputies and round-table discussions with representatives of administrative authorities. The organization engaged the Khmelnytsky City Council Department of Culture and Tourism and formed a partnership network of public organizations and

charitable foundations. *Women’s Hub* also prepared recommendations and draft decisions on amendments in the education development program, and the comprehensive “Pikluvannya” (Care) program in the Khmelnytsky community for 2022 to 2026.

As a result, eight Khmelnytsky libraries were identified to offer the *Free Mom* service. Their physical facilities and resources were examined, service schedules were established, and a list of necessary purchases for arranging space for children was determined.

In March 2023, *Women’s Hub* won a contest of public initiatives and was awarded \$5,500 by the Khmelnytsky City Council to adjust four libraries for the provision of the *Free Mom* service. To arrange other children’s spaces, the organization also plans to participate in grants contests and state and local programs. *Women’s Hub* also plans to continue to promote its recommendations for changes in local programs.



Meeting of the Working Group on the Development of the Preschool Education System in Khmelnytskyi City and Improving Access to it for IDP children. December 2022.

Successfully advocating for change to strengthen women’s economic capacity: A story from *Na-Diya* Letychiv District WRO

For years, *Na-Diya* has been a participant in the *Superpower* program. Under the program, the organization has received support to develop its institutional capacity and gain access to financing for projects that help women and girls in difficult circumstances.

The Russian full-scale war against Ukraine did not stop *Na-Diya* from conducting advocacy activities. Through its *WoU* grant, *Na-Diya* set the goal of advocating for the expansion of economic empowerment of women, both internally displaced and local, in Letychiv and Medzhybizh communities in the Khmelnytsky region.



Advocacy for sustainable changes

Na-Diya analyzed economic support programs that were active in the Letychiv and Medzhybizh communities and conducted an assessment of the financial support needed by internally displaced women in those communities.



Na-Diya members and internally displaced women during a Pact mentoring visit. December 2022.

It established working groups to develop and improve both the programs and the activities the programs conducted. One such improvement put forward by *Na-Diya* is the integration of internally displaced women into new communities. All interested stakeholders were gathered – representatives of administrative services centers, administrations, departments of education, employment centers and, of course, internally displaced women themselves. In addition, the organization held meetings with deputies and directly participated in meetings of local community councils, where it presented the programs it had

developed.

As a result, both communities supported the programs offered by *Na-Diya*. In late 2022, the Letychiv community decided to provide UAH 100,000 (USD 2,770) from its local budget for 2023, and the Medzhybizh community decided to provide UAH 300,000 (USD 8,300) for 2023 and 2024.

The programs will also contribute to the integration of internally displaced women into new communities.

“We achieved this result by joining the efforts of active internally displaced woman, public organizations, and representatives of authorities at different levels. We work in the difficult conditions of the war, and we understand the challenges that women face. This result inspires and gives faith in a better future for Ukraine,” says Natalia Nianchuk, head of *Na-Diya*.



A session of the Medzhybizh Council Executive Committee considers the *Na-Diya* program. December 12, 2022.

Support, adaptation, and integration of internally displaced women

At the same time, *Na-Diya* held events aimed at supporting women directly. For example, they taught them how to write business plans. They also invited representatives of banks, employment centers and the tax service, which shared available opportunities, programs and financial activities for women, as well as advice on how to run their own businesses. Women also received psychological support from the organization and were able to support each other and to exchange ideas.

One of the participants, Yuliya, won a state grant that enabled her to start her own business making fruit and vegetable pastille. With her large family, a dog, and a cat, she fled from Kherson and moved to Medzhybizh, in Khmelnytsky region. Back in Kherson, she used to make pastille for her family and friends and sold some through Instagram. When Kherson was liberated and her husband came home, the first thing she asked for was to send her a fruit dehydrator. Yulia had thought that a state grant was something out of her reach, but she credits *Na-Diya* for helping her to realize it was possible. Now, Yuliya has become an entrepreneur and is registered as a sole proprietor. State funding enabled her to procure the equipment she needed for her production processes.



A meeting of *Na-Diya* members, Pact representatives and internally displaced women. There is no electricity, but we were charged with positive energy. December 2022.



Yulia (right) and her mother at a *Na-Diya* event. December 2022.

Even a light nudge and support can improve women’s economic capacity. The women who attended the events held by *Na-Diya* have begun to have a feeling of belonging in their new communities. In turn, the communities are benefitting from the fact that these women have not only become economically independent, but contributors to community development.

Like at home. Internally displaced women integrate into the communities of Ivano-Frankivsk region: A story from *D.O.M.48.24* WRO

Oksana’s story

Oksana, who is from Kharkiv, moved to the Ivano-Frankivsk region together with her daughter and disabled mother because of the war. The family found temporary makeshift accommodation in a kindergarten.

Keeping a friend company, Oksana came to a humanitarian aid distribution point. That was how she learned about *D.O.M.48.24*.



“I was surprised by the friendly atmosphere in the organization. After all, I came for the first time, I did not expect anything special, but I was welcomed in a very warm and friendly manner.”

Later, Oksana served as a respondent in a focus group survey conducted by the organization to study the needs of internally displaced women and their families.

“When we were coming to Ivano-Frankivsk region, I thought, ‘who needs us there?’ I was pleasantly surprised that so many people are concerned and take care of us, both NGOs and local authorities. Of course, not everything is perfect. But what matters most is that all want to help,” Oksana says.

Following the focus group discussion, Oksana participated in *D.O.M.48.24* events, including a round-table discussion where recommendations for the support and integration of internally displaced persons were presented. She also joined art therapy sessions and a documentary theater.

She says the focus groups, and events like the documentary theater, were the support that she needed at that time.



“I realized that I should not ignore myself. Every day reminded me that I work hard for my family and sometimes seem to forget about myself. I learned to take better care of myself, to spend time on myself. And it is even easier when you see people whose needs are similar, and when you can share with them, it makes you feel better,” Oksana shares.



Oksana, an internally displaced woman from Kharkiv.



Oksana and other participants of the Documentary Theatre in classes – an initiative within the *Women Leading Response and Recovery in Ukraine* project. September 2022.

Studying and responding to the needs of internally displaced women

To help Oksana and other women who were forced to leave their homes, *D.O.M.48.24* first conducted a study of their needs. Based on the survey findings, the organization developed recommendations for city and regional authorities to consider while developing support and integration programs for new residents.



A meeting of representatives of Pact, *D.O.M.48.24* and Head of the Ivano-Frankivsk Community Integration Department, Andriy Derkach. September 2022.

In response to the needs of internally displaced women, *D.O.M.48.24* organized networking and training events dedicated to employment and the basics of establishing one’s own business, as well as informal picnics so women could get to know each other and exchange useful contacts and information. The organization also provided regular psychological support and humanitarian aid.

D.O.M.48.24 has registered positive results in its advocacy activities. Cooperation with the organization enabled the Administration of Community

Integration of Ivano-Frankivsk to develop regulations on the creation of a coordination center for IDPs, which will include representatives of NGOs and internally displaced persons. In cooperation with *D.O.M.48.24*, a deputy to the local council submitted a proposal to the City Council to organize the educational process according to the principle “money follows the child.” The possibility of leaving a child at a kindergarten will make it easier to find a job for their mothers. At present, to place a child in a kindergarten, both the mother and the father must provide formal documents that they both are employed.

Cooperation with businesses

As part of the project, *D.O.M.48.24* supported the operation of 18 shelters for IDPs, reimbursing their utility bills and paying for administration and cleaning services.

Olha and David co-own a hotel in Tysmenytsia, which is one of these shelters. The hotel sheltered



A meeting of Pact and D.O.M.48.24 representatives with Olha and David, hotel owners in Tysmenytsia, who provided shelter to hundreds of displaced individuals. September 2022.

hundreds of women, children and men who were forced to leave their homes because of the war.

“It was a natural reaction to help people in need. We did what we could do at that time,” Olha recalls about the first months of the full-scale war.

According to Natalya Vyshnevetska, head of D.O.M.48.24, to provide support to those who supported others was an important and timely decision.

Establishing dialogue between IDPs and local authorities: A story from *Mediation and Dialogue center WRO*

Formed in 2016, the *Mediation and Dialogue Center* is an organization that promotes a culture of quality communication in society through mediation and dialogue. In 2020, the organization joined the *Superpower* program and received its first grant from *WoU* in 2022.

Under the *Superpower* program, *Mediation and Dialogue Center* established coordination councils on internally displaced persons in five communities in the Rivne region. The organization saw that there were certain difficulties in the dialogue between local authorities and IDPs, and that one of the most important needs of IDPs needed to be heard. Therefore, the organization set about addressing this and other needs of people who arrived in the community.

“This is our first grant project. Of course, there was fear at the beginning of its implementation. At the same time, the local authorities were willing to engage in dialogue, ready to try new things and cooperate with the organization,” says Alyona Poliukhovych, a member of *Mediation and Dialogue Center* and Project Coordinator.

Dialogue platforms for IDPs, local authorities and the community

The coordination councils established by *Mediation and Dialogue Center* are comprised of internally displaced women and local residents. The councils identify the needs of internally displaced persons; facilitate dialogue between them, local authorities, and local residents; promote the integration of internally displaced persons; and impact and change community life for the better.

Although the councils are fairly new, they have identified critical needs and brought about major changes in community life. For example, the Ostroh City Council received funding from a charitable foundation to create a children’s center and a psychological relief room for children from displaced families. The



Olha Shmyndruk, a member of *Mediation and Dialogue Center*, presents achievements of its grant project at the *Supporting Women and Girls in the War Context* forum. March 2023.

Kostopil library began providing lessons on how to use virtual communication platforms after its city council found that elderly women were unaware of opportunities for IDPs because they did not know how to use Messenger and other phone applications. The local authorities of Kostopil allocated funds in its 2023 budget for discounted transportation for IDPs in their community.



Meeting of the Coordination Council in Ostroh. January 2023.

The Klevanska community plans to attract grants from international organizations to renovate a closed school into housing for IDPs. And to solve the problem of their employment, they plan to involve businesses in creating new jobs.

In Radyvyliv, the local coordination council plans to open a space in the library to offer computer literacy and interactive games. The community was also inspired by the example of Ostroh and their psychological relief room and have now set a goal to create one of their own.

Sustainability for All

Coordination councils work voluntarily. The services they advocate for are available not only to displaced people, but also to local residents.

Thanks to their participation in the coordination councils, internally displaced women have become integrated into communities and small changes initiated by the grant project have led to institutional changes.



“We see the benefits of the work of coordination councils that help internally displaced women and their families. We believe the councils will ensure the sustainability of changes in communities in the future. They may even organize themselves into formal WROs,” says Alyona.



Pact representatives visit Mediation and Dialogue center. January 2023.



Peer exchange visit of representatives of the Western Hub to the Eastern Hub. October 2021.

There is Power in Networking

Mediation and Dialogue Center was inspired to create coordination councils thanks to the peer exchange between the Western and Eastern clusters within the *Superpower* for WROs program. Their peer exchange trip to Kharkiv took place in the fall of 2021.



Prior to the implementation of its first grant project, *Mediation and Dialogue Center* did not have funding. The organization periodically implemented social orders and its members worked mostly on a volunteer basis. Moreover, they even contributed their own money to design a logo, order banners, and brochures. “If it wasn’t for *Superpower*, we would have been volunteering all the time,” Alyona admits.



Representatives of the organization with a trainer at the Western Cluster’s training on “Managing Personnel and Processes in an Organization”. September 2023

The organization has developed a strategy as a result of its participation in *WoU*. Its members regularly attend trainings and events organized by the Western Hub and by Pact. In 2023, *Mediation and Dialogue Center* implemented another grant project within *WoU* – a coalition project with five other organizations. The aim was to respond to security challenges faced by WROs and to advocate for the localization of the National Action Plan 1325 “Women. Peace. Security”.

Securing visibility and removing barriers for persons with disabilities in the Chernivtsi region: A story from *We are Equal* WRO

Teaching to see needs

Founded in 2019, *We are Equal* is a young, but effective organization that works to build rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities, especially women and girls.

In 2021, as part of a grant from *WoU*, the organization helped schools in three communities in the Chernivtsi region to make their spaces accessible so that all children could be involved in the educational process. Most importantly, the organization taught communities to understand the needs of persons with disabilities, helped to create a tolerant environment, and changed attitudes toward people, notably women and girls, with disabilities. As the head of one of the communities noted, the community strives to create a comfortable space for everyone, but this requires additional knowledge. For example, five years ago, the community built ramps at the entrances to schools, but later it turned out that they did not meet building standards.



Head of *We are Equal* Olena Babeshko. December 2021.

Getting support

We are Equal began its project under *WoU* by holding meetings with representatives of local governments in each community, working with them to identify schools to participate and to gain their support.

All schools selected were built during the Soviet era, when the term “barrier-free” did not exist. Audits of spaces revealed significant problems. None of the schools had accessible toilets. Ramps did not meet standards. Stairs and doorways were not accessible for persons with visual impairments. Playgrounds also were not accessible, and the schools lacked safe stops for buses and parking for special vehicles.

After the audits, many of the issues were quickly corrected. To correct more fundamental issues, the schools’ management engaged additional funding. *We are Equal* provided trainings named ‘education hours’ to students and staff who embraced the lessons shared with them. ‘Education hours’ were so popular that *We are Equal* added extra events, and the principal of an additional school in Vyzhnytsia requested sessions.

Communities want to change

Besides physical changes at schools, *We are Equal* built acceptance and understanding among students, teachers, administrators, and heads of village councils. Based on this success, *We are Equal* has agreed with participating communities to continue its mentoring support on a volunteer basis through newly established community Accessibility Committees.



Oksana Bryzhovata of *WoU* says, “The most important thing is that just after a few months, the communities changed their attitude toward the needs of persons with disabilities. They renovated their spaces, buildings, and territories to make them barrier-free for all and engaged funding for that.”

Olena Babeshko, head of *We are Equal*, who herself uses a wheelchair, agrees that the change has been communitywide.

“I am extremely happy that we took part in the project. I have seen our school differently. I have seen all the issues. I have planned what we can change immediately, and what we would do when we have the budget. This is so important for ensuring quality education,” says Vira Pasariuk, Principal of the Roztokivska school in the Ust-Putyl community.

“When we go to the offices of heads of local councils and have a dialog with them, we feel equal. We work with them to change communities and to improve the lives not only of persons with disabilities, but of all community members,” Olena says.



We are Equal working meeting in the Berehomet community. July 2021.

Since the start of Russia’s full-scale war in Ukraine

The local Accessibility Committees have not been able to start their work because of the war, and some improvement plans have been put on hold. For example, the Ust-Putyl Community Council recognized the need to purchase a new school bus equipped with a lift and applied for state funding to do so in January, but because of the war, funding through this program from the state budget has been suspended.

Instead, these schools, along with *We are Equal*, in coalition with other organizations, helped internally displaced women and children, including persons with disabilities, in Vyzhnytsia through *WoU*. Furthermore, the organization’s experience in creating an inclusive and barrier-free space is now even more relevant than ever given emerging needs in the recovery of Ukraine.



Southern Cluster

The Southern Interregional Hub for the Capacity Building of local women’s rights organizations (WROs) is the *Public Center ‘New Generation’* WRO. As of December 31, 2023, the Southern Cluster included the following local WROs:

- *Association for Democratic Development* WRO;
- *Zhyva-Ya* WRO;
- *Lyubystok* WRO;
- *Women’s Center ‘Support, Protection and Care’* WRO;
- *Positive Women. Kherson* WRO;
- *Sama* WRO;
- *Usi svoji* WRO;
- *Successful woman* WRO
- *Charitable Organization ‘Voznesensk community fund’* WRO; and
- *St. Olha Community Foundation of Hola Prystan* WRO.

Becoming a driver of organizational development and keeping the community together: A story from *Public Center ‘New Generation’* WRO, Southern Interregional Hub for capacity building of local WROs

The history of *Public Center ‘New Generation’* began in 1993. Back then, in the wake of the national revival, active Kherson students, young educators, and women educators united to promote cultural and educational projects and engage in patriotic education of young people. The organization grew rapidly and in the 2000s began to conduct human rights activities, including projects to protect the rights of women and children and to promote gender equality. *New Generation* actively involved local organizations in Kherson region in its initiatives and later began to advise young organizations on their founding documents, project implementation, and more. “By helping other organizations, we were already working as a kind of resource center, although we didn’t call ourselves that yet,” says Oksana Hlebushkina, executive director of *New Generation*.



The *Public Center ‘New Generation’* team.

Later, the organization officially received the status of an organizational development provider through a project managed by Ukrainian organization *ISAR-Ednannia*. In 2019, *New Generation* applied for a competition under Pact’s *Superpower for WROs* program to become a Hub.



“It was a great opportunity for us to join the women’s movement and share our experience with those organizations whose main target group is women,” says Oksana.

The organization won and became the Southern Interregional Hub, which is comprised of 12 women's organizations from the Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Odesa regions.

Individual approach

"We fight fires, run to save people - and only then do we pay attention to ourselves, to our organization. It slows down its development," says Oksana about the general trend among organizations that the Hub diagnosed at the beginning of its work.



School of Trainers held by the Southern Hub in the summer of 2023.

"Our organizations had successfully implemented projects and program activities, but many of them did not have basic documents, procedures, policies, or even a development strategy," adds Olha Zhukova, an expert and consultant at *New Generation*. When the participating WROs conducted an ITOCA, it turned out that, in most areas, their capacity was low. So, the Hub started to work. The cluster's organizations received training as part of the Superpower program and trainings that the Hub organized specifically for the needs of the organizations. *"We applied an individual approach to each*

organization and developed a specific development plan for each organization," says Oksana, *"because despite the general focus, each organization had its own specifics, even the target groups were quite different."*

Olha provides an example of her work with the *Zhyva-Ya* WRO, which developed feedback standards: *"You can take a template document and slightly modify it for yourself, but we started analyzing their practice of communicating with target groups, analyzed feedback, and eventually formed an original, unique feedback policy."*



Members of *New Generation* Olha Zhukova, Oksana Hlebushkina, and Yulia Bronska during a *WoU* Community of Practice event. March 2023.



Ring the Bell for Gender Equality campaign conducted by the Southern Hub. March 2021.

The Southern Hub also actively advised organizations on project management and implementation of specific initiatives. *"I can say that several ideas for new projects were born out of our consultations, thanks to our support, both expert and emotional,"* says Oksana. In total, the Southern Cluster organizations designed more than 15 new projects during the *Superpower* program, several of which were supported by the *WoU* project.

An outsider's view

"Superpower and our work as a Hub made us look at ourselves from the outside," says Oksana. At that time, the *New Generation* was quite developed organizationally, and when it also conducted



an ITOCA as part of the program for their own organization, it received high scores. *“I remember the expert who conducted the assessment saying that having high scores in all segments is a dead end for an organization,”* says Olha. *“We realized that we needed to develop all the time, improve our policies and practices.”* During the Superpower program, *New Generation* experts finalized several of their policies and reviewed the organization’s development strategy. *“It was very useful for us to develop a stakeholder engagement matrix, which we immediately applied to our own projects,”* Oksana notes. After the full-scale war began, the organization, within the *Superpower* program, analyzed new target audiences. The result was working in a new programming segment for the organization: support for IDP women. The organization has recently completed a comprehensive project that provided psychological, legal, and economic support to displaced women.



Visit of Larysa Galadza, Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine (2019-2023) and Ashley Mulroney, Head of International Development at the Embassy of Canada in Ukraine (through 2023) to Kherson. September 2020.

“As for us, thanks to Superpower, we have become an even stronger, but at the same time, more flexible organization,” Oksana summarizes. *“The organizations in our cluster have made a huge growth step. “Now, at the end of the program,”* adds Olha, *“we have a developed strategy, an organizational chart, know what policies and procedures are, and know how to work with donors and grantors. This is a huge change that has taken place over these years.”*



However, both members of the organization believe that the greatest achievement is not the development indicators, but the way the cluster’s organizations have met the challenges of war.

Rescue operation

Since March 2022, some of the Southern Cluster organizations, including the Hub, have been under Russian occupation. With great difficulty – often at the risk of their lives – some members of the organizations managed to leave the occupied territories, but others could not. *“The question then was how we could all survive and not lose each other,”* says Oksana. When the members of the Hub who had relocated to Ivano-Frankivsk began to recover, they began to plan how they could support women from partner organizations. That is how the mutual support groups materialized, with women from different regions of Ukraine and abroad joining them. *“For several months, we met regularly online, just talking, and then participated in various psychological support trainings. It helped us return to life and to a working state”*, says Oksana. Members of the organizations even started working abroad, as a result of relocation, and providing services to their target groups, as well as organizing humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

The organizations returned from relocation to Mykolaiv and Voznesensk and partially to Kherson after the de-occupation. Of 12 organizations in the Southern Cluster, only one suspended its activities completely. Other organizations have resumed their work in various forms.



“The fact that we are still functioning, that we have proved to be resilient, is largely the result of the network of mutual support and assistance that we have built at Superpower,” summarizes Oksana. *“And this, I think, is one of the most important achievements of this wonderful program.”*



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