

NGO LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP LUBLIN, Poland

September 17 - 21, 2023

FINAL REPORT

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In September 2023, 24 NGO leaders from across Ukraine completed an interactive four-day workshop focused on well-being, resilience building, avoiding burnout, strategic planning in crisis and supporting people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The workshop also provided an opportunity to network and share best practices in a safe, welcoming environment. It was the first NGO Leadership Workshop designed for NGO leaders from Ukraine and was created in response to the needs resulting from the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

This was the eleventh NGO Leadership Workshop offered by two centers based at the University of Michigan: the Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia and the William Davidson Institute. It was the fourth workshop held in Poland with Warsaw-based partner the Education for Democracy Foundation, which supports democratization and civil society development.



ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants were selected through an open application process from a pool of 80+ applicants. Participants attended the workshop at no charge and came from across Ukraine. Their NGOs focused on a range of activities, including: providing critical medical services, offering psychological assistance, defending human rights, providing legal services, and preserving Ukrainian cultural heritage.

PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS

- Anti-Corruption Center of Koropshchyna
- Center for Civic Initiatives “Skhidna Brama”
- Charitable Foundation “Eudemony of Ukraine”
- Free Thread
- Future of Koropshchyna
- Girls
- Group of Influence
- Helping Ukrainians
- Innovation and Development Foundation-Ukraine
- Khmelnychanka Women’s Association
- Kiev School of Public Administration Named After Serhiy Nizhny
- Mukachevo Red Cross Society
- National Network of Local Philanthropy Development
- Outpost of Consciousness
- Positive Women Kherson
- ProLife Ukraine
- Pro Women UA
- Rule of Law Research Center
- Spilno HUB
- Time to Unite
- Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research
- Volyn Foundation
- Your City Romen

CONTENT

Sessions focused on:

- NETWORKING
- WELLBEING / BURNOUT PREVENTION
- RESILIENCE / STRATEGIC PLANNING IN CRISIS
- NEGOTIATIONS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Sessions were led by:

Martyna Bogaczyk, a trainer at the Education for Democracy Foundation since 2006 and has served as Chairman of the Board at FED since 2016. Throughout her career, she has been responsible for various activities in Eastern Europe, including coordinating projects and conducting trainings. She is also an author of training programs, lesson plans, and educational materials.

Eric Fretz, a professional educator and coach who focuses on personal development, emotional intelligence, and resilience. He teaches at the University of Michigan at the undergraduate and graduate level. He is retired from 24 years of service in the US Navy, deploying three times to combat zones across two wars.

Natalia Kertyczak, a trainer and project coordinator at the Education for Democracy Foundation, with 14 years of experience in designing and implementing capacity-building programs for activists, local authorities, leaders, teachers, and educators in Poland and Eastern Europe. She specializes in local governance, citizen participation, citizenship education, and active training methods. At FED, she is responsible for partnering with Ukraine and overseeing civic education and dialogue initiatives.

Martyna Markiewicz, a trainer who focuses on the areas of wellbeing, gender equity, and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). She is also the head of partnerships at Ashoka Poland.

Natalia Sarata, an NGO leader, independent researcher, consultant and trainer based in Warsaw. She is the leader of RegenerAction Foundation, one of the first NGOs in Poland dealing with activist and civic burnout.

Iryna Tymoshchenko-Petrova, a Director of the MA program in Human Resources and Organization Development at the UCU Business School. She is a certified facilitator, trainer, coach, and a neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) master practitioner.

OPENING RECEPTION

Geneviève Zubrzycki, Director of the University of Michigan's Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia, delivered the workshop's opening keynote address at the Crown Tribunal in the heart of Lublin's old town. Welcoming remarks were given by Roman Jaborkhel, Deputy Director of Lublin City Hall's International Cooperation Centre, which generously offered to host the reception. Participants and organizers also heard remarks from former U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia Ronald N. Weiser and current U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Mark Brzezinski, highlighting the significance of this workshop and the sustained commitment of the U.S. and Poland to supporting Ukraine.



Participants had many networking opportunities during the week. Beginning with the opening dinner on the eve of the program, the camaraderie continued through an interactive walking tour of Lublin, a midweek evening visit to the community center Baobab, which offers support to the local refugee community, and a closing dinner at Sielsko Anielsko, a restaurant in Old Town Lublin.

DAY 1

NETWORKING

TRAINERS: MARTYNA BOGACZYK & NATALIA KERTYCZAK

On the first day of training, participants commenced their exploration of getting to know one another more intimately, delving deeper into their respective organizations' activities in Ukraine. Facilitators Martyna and Natalia skillfully integrated interactive icebreakers throughout the session, creating a secure and welcoming atmosphere for participants to engage and share. This thoughtfully nurtured environment facilitated productive and collaborative learning.



DAY 2

WELLBEING / BURNOUT PREVENTION

TRAINERS: MARTYNA MARKIEWICZ & NATALIA SARATA

The central themes of the day revolved around the critical aspects of wellbeing and the prevention of burnout within the social sector. The discussions commenced by examining the various factors and symptoms associated with burnout. The day's discourse also ventured into potential solutions and perspectives aimed at preventing burnout, offering valuable insights for participants.

Two consistent frameworks and narratives guided the discussions. The first framework emphasized the significance of delving into the specific challenges within the social change sector and their profound impact on wellbeing and burnout. The second framework introduced the concept of three distinct levels pertaining to burnout factors and prevention strategies. These levels encompassed individual, organizational, and systemic dimensions, providing a comprehensive approach to addressing and mitigating burnout.



DAY 3**RESILIENCE / STRATEGIC PLANNING
IN CRISIS****TRAINER: ERIC FRETZ**

This session explored emotional intelligence, stress management, and building resilience. It also delved into essential aspects of leadership and crisis planning. Given the backdrop of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting trauma experienced by the Ukrainian population, there arose a specific demand for Professor Fretz's extensive expertise in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health issues prevalent among refugees and those in crisis situations.

Within his session, Professor Fretz incorporated Mental Health First Aid, offering insights into common issues often encountered in high-stress work environments. These included discussions on conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance abuse disorder.



DAY 4

NEGOTIATIONS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

TRAINER: IRYNA TYMOSHCHENKO-PETROVA

The training revolved around the Harvard negotiation model, which is renowned for its practical approach to resolving disputes and achieving mutually beneficial agreements. Participants had the opportunity to delve into the intricacies of negotiation with hands-on practice, gaining valuable insights into effective communication and conflict resolution. Participants learned how to identify and capitalize on mutually advantageous opportunities during negotiations, fostering cooperation and sustainable agreements.

The training also addressed the complexities of managing conflicts during negotiations, drawing insights from the work of Glazl. Understanding the underlying causes of conflicts and learning effective conflict resolution techniques are essential skills for participants, enabling them to navigate challenging situations and maintain productive dialogue.



RESULTS

The goals of the workshop were to empower Ukrainian NGO leaders to **strengthen their capacities in well-being, resilience building, avoiding burnout, strategic planning in crisis** and **supporting people with PTSD**.

The ExtendEd portal was utilized to solidify learning before, during, and after the workshop. Participants will continue to access supplementary elearning content on ExtendEd in social media marketing, conflict resolution, and leadership. NGO Leadership Workshop alumni groups on both Facebook and LinkedIn are facilitating ongoing networking and connections.



ExtendEd
Extend Your Learning

Evaluations were extremely positive, with measured outcomes of the overall program receiving high approval on the:

- relevance of content to organization
- applicability to work
- match with expectations

100%

of the participants **“strongly agreed”** that they would recommend the workshop to others in their field.

In summary, the program reached its goal of equipping NGO leaders from Ukraine with the skills, tools, and mindset needed to run more effective organizations and to bring fresh thinking and energy to their organizations.

NEXT STEPS

WCEE and WDI plan to build on previous successes to offer a 12th NGO Leadership workshop in Košice, Slovakia in June 2024. This workshop will also support NGOs focused on relief efforts in Ukraine.

Please visit [WCEE's](#) or [WDI's](#) workshop pages for further information.

IN PARTICIPANTS' OWN WORDS

This workshop gave me the confidence that I am a leader, that I have the strength and ability to continue to support women. I have to take care of my team, prevent burnout and conflicts, and lead ethical policies, then the world will be a better place.

The workshop was an extraordinary opportunity. The trainers were chosen perfectly, professional and aimed at working with the audience. The participants were professional and friendly. The exchange of experiences was extremely useful. I think that I have found future partners.

I will return to Ukraine with what I wanted to learn. About strength, about solving problems in a win-win style, about my potential and the potential of the organization. I am grateful to the organizers.

The participants, organizers and trainers were wonderful, friendly, and polite. My expectations were met, and at the same time I got more than I expected. I gained new prospects, new contacts, and new friends with like-minded people.

A WORD FROM OUR TRAINER

It often takes weeks for a class to “shift” into a mode where people are willing to challenge and query and trust in group sharing, but this group made that change in under 2 hours. It was the most productive and worthwhile day of my year thus far. I was really inspired by the participants’ stories as well as their energy and engagement with the material.

-Eric Fretz, Trainer

