

Ukraine Civil Society Forum

Recommendations on Education

Fellows of Salzburg Global Seminar gathered in Schloss Leopoldskron in Salzburg, Austria, on 4-8 June 2023 for a program held as part of Salzburg Global's [Ukraine Civil Society Forum](#).

At the meeting, several working groups set out priorities for the country, including concrete recommendations for stakeholders to support the rights, return, and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees, addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term perspectives, including the ultimate physical reconstruction and social integration of liberated territories as part of a Ukraine-wide project of national identity.

Civil society plays a critical role in supporting the state and its citizens not only during wartime but also in planning for the physical and political reconstruction after the end of hostilities. In the context of Ukraine, in which 5.9 million people are internally displaced and another eight million have fled to neighboring countries, civil society will have a significant role to play in supporting displaced persons and refugees, as well as the reintegration and rebuilding of de-occupied territories after the war. Over the longer-term, civil society will also need to play a crucial role in any and all peace and reconciliation efforts, including in the development of a post-war and Ukraine-wide national dialogue project.

With so many people displaced inside and outside Ukraine and the economy on a wartime footing, it remains essential to keep civil society leaders supported and connected to one another and with other strategic actors in the international donor, development, political, and private sectors. A connected and resilient civil society sector in Ukraine will create opportunities for dialogue on different levels of society to develop a shared vision for post-war reconstruction and national dialogue, including different social and historical narratives that help shape an inclusive identity for Ukraine.

However, international and domestic conferences on Ukraine have shunted civil society to side events or have featured representatives of governments, donor countries, or international organizations speaking at rather than listening to civil society. Salzburg Global Seminar's Ukraine Civil Society Forum intends to ensure that Ukrainians themselves will be equipped with a way to move forward and to elevate the voices of Ukrainian civil society, and in particular women, in discussions on the future of Ukraine.

WORKING GROUP ON EDUCATION

As the national Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Ukraine is fortunately fulfilling its role and attempting to continue to provide education to all, the role of the civil society organizations would ultimately be to support and monitor the MoES efforts and to advocate for more transparency and more participation of all the stakeholders of education in shaping policy and in overcoming the current challenges faced by all the groups of learners and educators inside and outside the country to guarantee quality and inclusive education in the short and long terms.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS (WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NOW?)

Quality education is a human right, though different groups in different contexts might have specific needs to enforce their right to education. Broadly, the working group identified those groups: IDPs, populations in occupied territories, Ukrainians who left Ukraine, learners with special needs (disabilities), learners from minorities (ethnic, religious, gender-based, etc.) and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Below are needs that we think relevant to different groups expecting education, mainly living in Ukraine. There are groups that might have additional needs, like for example, financially and socially disadvantaged children and youth, teachers in rural areas.

- Improving access to education
 - Physical safety & cyber safety training
 - Destroyed schools restoration and building bomb shelters in all schools & support safe transportation
 - Access to technology (devices & internet) mainly for IDPs, rural areas and liberated territories
 - Support for creating barrier free education environment (e.g. physical barriers and social stigmatization of learners with different needs)
- Ensuring wellbeing & protection of all the stakeholders
 - Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for all (e.g., teachers & students as well as Edu staff)
- Supporting education across the whole ecosystem, e.g.
 - Adapt and create new curricula and adopt modern pedagogies to respond to the evolving needs in the country (quality and relevance of education)
 - Support and development profession technological education (eg. technological colleges)
 - Support and engage girls and women to IT and STEM education
 - Provide teachers' support & relevant training responding to current needs
 - Develop a clear and stable education policy through consultations with all the stakeholders. To consult with a wide range of stakeholders before making decisions in the educational and upbringing sphere. Cover topics that are discussed in the media and social media.
- Improving communication in the sector and connecting between local, national and global stakeholders of education and improving communication and information exchange

LONG TERM GOALS (WHAT NEEDS TO BE ACHIEVED AFTER THE WAR, WHICH WILL REQUIRE ACTIONS/POLICIES TO START NOW?)

Vision and Purpose

- Leading a local, national consultation\ for developing a relevant and updated vision & purpose of the national education for everyone

Quality Education

- Provide a quality and inclusive education that allows children & youth to acquire life skills and live safely and contribute to the democratic decision-making processes.
- Development of quality education in rural areas. Sufficient development of out-of-school free education with all stakeholders informed about the opportunities created. It is recommended to develop a system of support for children from rural areas.
- Improve teachers' knowledge of life skills and critical thinking subjects for a more democratic approach to education. It is recommended to make it compulsory to teach subjects using critical thinking methods.
- Provide teachers with one paid week a year for professional development.

- Sustainable participation in restructuring and updating the educational system to emerging needs:
 - Reproductive health and anti-violence programs are recommended to be included in the educational process as mandatory.
 - Due to the growing number of children and people with various forms of disabilities due to the war, more diversity sensitivity programs should be introduced.
 - Optimize the number of groups and classes to no more than 20-25 children in the educational process, with the possibility of having an additional teacher/social worker for individual lessons.
 - Introducing the skills of psychological support for students for effective interaction and ensuring a safe educational space for teachers

Recommendations

For Civil Society

- Conduct assessment of the current needs in education across all the levels and regions
- Monitoring and open-access reporting of the real situation of access to quality and inclusive education to all Ukrainians in all the regions and contexts
- Creating and maintaining a mapping of CSO active in education in all its aspects
- Making use of international training materials and resources related to education in emergencies after a proper contextualization through the involvement of Ukrainian and international experts.
- Create an information and advocacy campaign to encourage participatory processes while shaping education policy with young people and children.
- Advocate with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for the development of an inclusive and fair strategy of supporting with devices.
- Advocate for the bottom-up collection and transmission of data

For Government

Participation and Coordination

- Reactivate the existing coordination mechanism to (re-)connect national, local and global stakeholders in the education ecosystem
- Make use of the IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms
- There is a big interest in providing secure, quality and flexible offline and online education for Ukrainian students outside Ukraine. This requires to work collaboratively with local actors (e.g. Prometheus, Osvitoria) to ensure a quality online offer for learners of all ages. A coordinator would make sure the information is properly collected and shared and solutions are designed through proper partnerships. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine should play this role, eventually the ministry needs to enforce the coordination mechanisms.

Information Exchange

- Improve transparency and information sharing and exchange between stakeholders
- Create and share a mapping of available education and professional development opportunities on the national and regions' levels through the reactivated coordination mechanisms.

Access to Education and Professional Development

- Provide clear support measures, mainly financial support and availing dedicated time, for the teacher professional development (post-grad programs)
- Making use of international training materials and resources after a proper contextualization through the involvement of Ukrainian and international experts.
- Coordinate the efforts to avail proper distribution of devices to the most needing

populations to allow children and adults to access education and professional development, this includes mobile phones, tablets and eventually laptops.

- Work collaboratively to ensure a quality online offer for learners from all age.

For Private Sector

- Donate devices for learners
- Avail affordable access to the internet
- Engage the Corporate Social Responsibility actions (CSR) to support access to education: e.g.supporting the building of bomb shelters, buying learning materials and school kits, etc.
- Enlarging the offer of scholarship programs & professional development (e.g., corporate universities)

For the International Community

- Inform about other similar education in emergencies (EiE) experiences and available resources in other countries
- Support efforts to contextualize and use available capacity strengthening of educators and education actors, notably related to education in emergencies
- Facilitate participatory processes to improve the access to quality and inclusive education
- Present policies on child protection, confidentiality, violence and sexual abuse from around the world. Peculiarities of implementing these practices at different levels of decision-making and in the work of the organizations themselves.
- Sharing the fundraising experience to support programs for children and students seeking scholarships for education.