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PRESS RELEASE

Ukrainian NGOs Will Get Together to Find Ways to Better Support Internally Displaced People in Ukraine

Representatives of **more than 50 NGOs from all over Ukraine** will gather in Lviv, Ukraine on 12-13 May to exchange experiences and learn from local and foreign experts on how to better support internally displaced persons (IDPs). The conference will concentrate on the issues of the integration of IDPs in the economic, legal and psychological spheres, as well as touch upon matters of planning, implementation and fundraising for programmes aimed at supporting IDPs.

The conference programme was drawn from the results of questionnaire filled in by 70 NGOs working with IDPs. The biggest obstacle to their work appears to be the 'fatigue' of society from these matters, which results in difficulties in attracting resources and volunteers (51 answers). Among the needs of IDPs, most of the respondents state insufficient support with employment (43 answers) and lack of tolerance towards IDPs in their host communities (36 answers). NGOs working with IDPs mostly require cooperation with international organizations (59 answers), business (42 answers) and other NGOs that support IDPs (43 answers).

Conference participants will hear presentations from the former Minister for IDP Issues and Sheltering of Georgia, Tamar Martiashvili and from an expert in child psychology from the Italian Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Francesca Giordano. Plenty of time has been allocated for discussion, focusing on the role of the media, lobbying, effective communication and fundraising for the programmes of integration for IDPs. There will also be exhibitions of NGO projects (12 May) and donors (13 May).

The conference was initiated by the British charity The BEARR Trust and is organized jointly with the Institute of Leadership and Management (part of the Ukrainian Catholic University), with support from UNDP in Ukraine.

The BEARR Trust has been supporting NGOs in the countries that were part of the former Soviet Union for nearly twenty five years. In 2015 The BEARR Trust offered small grants for projects that provide psychological support for people displaced by the conflict in Ukraine. The Trust received 150 applications and awarded six small grants to groups from Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv and Zaporizhya. This year BEARR is giving small grants to projects that support skills training for refugees and other displaced people.

Robert Brinkley, chairman of The BEARR Trust, former UK Ambassador to Ukraine: *«Ukrainian society is strong. Outsiders have looked with admiration at Ukrainian volunteers and NGOs that have risen to the challenges of war, economic hardship and the displacement of over a million people within the country. They have done so with strength, initiative and self-sacrifice – truly as men and women for others».*

The Institute of Leadership and Management (part of the Ukrainian Catholic University) for 13 years has been working to support civil society organizations and youth leaders. It is unique as an educational institution in Ukraine, promoting the development of civil society organizations and helping them to do good in a more professional way.

Natalya Bordun, Director of the Institute of Leadership and Management:

“There is a great need for NGOs, in particular those working with IDPs, to have a platform to exchange experiences and ideas, meet donors and state officials. We believe that these connections are very important. They help in finding unusual solutions, unite efforts in implementation of new projects and deepen trust in the institutions of civil society. The Institute sees this conference as a great opportunity to contribute towards solving the most important social challenges.”

Additional information:

- The conference will be held at the Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv, Khutorivka str 35a
- This conference is co-organized by the British charity The BEARR Trust and the Institute of Leadership and Management of the University Catholic University . The organisers are grateful to UNDP for their financial support.
- The BEARR Trust is an English charity formed 25 years ago to help improve health and social welfare by supporting small NGOs in Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and South Caucasus by sharing know-how, skills and contacts. www.bearr.org, Twitter: @BEARRTweets, www.facebook.com/BEARRTrust
- over 50 Ukrainian NGOs will participate in the conference
- several donor organisations will join: IOM, USAID, UKAID, UNDP, WNISEF
- Representatives of Embassies of the US, Canada and UK will participate
- for questionnaire results please check p.5 of the Conference Programme
- for Robert Brinkley foreword see p.2 of the Conference Programme

Contacts:

Anna Lukanina-Morgan, BEARR Trust info@bearr.org