



## REPORT

on Consultations with IDP  
Council Members Regarding  
the Creation of a General  
Coordination Body

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## General Information about Consultation Participants

*In August, we conducted five consultations with members of IDP Councils at various levels and with representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to gather opinions, suggestions, and requests regarding the creation of a general coordination body for councils for internally displaced persons (IDP Councils).*

*These consultations also aimed to identify the current challenges hindering the effective functioning of IDP Councils.*

**A total of 128 individuals were registered to participate in the consultations, of which 76 directly took part in the survey. Among these participants were 64 members of IDP Councils, 23 NGO representatives (some of whom were members of both IDP Councils and NGOs), and 18 representatives of public authorities.**

The consultations included participants from oblast- and raion-level IDP Councils (Kyivska, Donetska, Mykolaivska, Odeska, Kirovohradska, Lvivska, Rivnenska, Chernihivska, Zakarpatska, Vinnytska, Kharkivska, Ternopilska, Poltavska, Zhytomyrska, Dnipropetrovska, Zaporizka, Ivano-Frankivska, Volynska, and Chernivetska Oblasts), and from Councils from specific cities and localities (Kyiv, Lubny, Zaporizhzhia, Chernivtsi, Korets, Lviv, Odesa, Drohobych, Ternopil, Zhytomyr, Mukachevo, and others).

In addition to IDP Council members, the consultations also involved NGO representatives from Zhytomyr, Kropyvnytskyi, Uzhhorod, Vinnytsia, Kremenchuk, Rivne, Mykolaiv, Irpin, Kyiv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Korosten, Zhovkva, and Lviv.

Government representatives attended from Kyiv, Kryzhanivka, Lviv, Rivne, Novhorod-Siverskyi, Berezanka, Korets, Kunye, Brusyliv, Uman, Dnipro, Bakhmut, Zaporizhzhia, Mukachevo, Voznesensk, and Poltava.

The participants included representatives from both IDP Councils established before the full-scale invasion and those established more recently (in late 2023), as well as local self-government representatives who were members of IDP Councils.

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## Key Findings of the Study

**The study identified the following key areas of activity for IDP Councils:**

- » Providing housing
- » Psychological support
- » Assistance with community integration and adaptation
- » Legal support
- » Conducting surveys to assess current needs

**Respondents discussed changes in the directions and goals of recent IDP Council activities.**

Participants from both long-established (before 2022) and more recently established (2022–2023) IDP Councils reported that there have been no significant changes.

*"Yes, some people have already settled in and no longer need humanitarian aid as much; but new people keep arriving, and they need support initially."*

**Overall, the goals and directions of IDP Council work haven't changed because the issues and needs remain constant. First, many communities and oblasts have limited resources to address the issues present when the IDP Council began operation. Second, evacuation and internal migration are ongoing, and the needs remain the same.**

- » First and foremost, housing needs to be provided. This is one of the most pressing issues due to the lack of funding and available housing.
- » Second, displaced persons need to be provided with humanitarian aid—food, hygiene products, clothing, and medicine.
- » Third, IDPs need help with employment and retraining.
- » Additionally, integration events need to be organized and conducted to help IDPs get acquainted with community residents, learn about community traditions and customs, meet local self-government bodies, relax, and feel part of the community.
- » Finally, it is important to develop guides. These essential directions for IDPs contain tips, instructions, and algorithms for solving the most common problems (e.g., where and how to get a certificate, what documents to collect, how to register with the employment office, where and from which organizations or local government bodies assistance can be obtained, etc.).

*"There is a constant need to provide housing for displaced persons, as people continue arriving in the communities. Specialized housing is not being built, and there is not enough housing stock."*

*"It would be good to have a common database where IDPs would be registered along with their occupations. Then it would be possible to see which oblast or community needs doctors or teachers and direct these IDPs to where they can immediately find a job instead of undergoing retraining."*

### **Participants in the study identified the following problems in how IDP Councils**

- » Relatively new IDP Councils (fall–winter 2023) do not know how to proceed with their work. They lack strategic planning and advice.
- » IDP Council members are poorly motivated, so they miss meetings or do not actively participate in them.
- » There is either a lack of communication or insufficient communication with local self-government bodies. Often, IDP Councils do not receive responses to their official letters and requests to local self-government bodies or receive refusals due to lack of funding.
- » IDP Councils are provided with insufficient premises, office equipment, and other necessary resources.
- » IDP Councils lack knowledge and skills in advocacy. They do not understand how to present their work to local self-government bodies to receive relevant feedback.
- » There is a lack of or weak coordination and cooperation between IDP Councils (e.g., between IDP Councils in villages and oblasts), as well as insufficient exchange of experience and success stories.
- » There is high turnover within IDP Councils. People move on quickly and tend not to stay long in the community.
- » DP Council members are reluctant to remove members who are also members of local self-government bodies due to the potential negative impact on the IDP Councils' activities.

*"In some cases, we have to hold IDP Council meetings in cafes, because we have not been allocated any separate room for this. Or we print documents at our main workplaces or at our own expense."*

*"We send official letters to local self-government bodies but often do not receive a response; it's very inconvenient when the IDP Council does not have its own local self-government representative who could communicate important information at government meetings."*



**Participants examined what is lacking in the proper organization of IDP Councils' work.**

**When discussing the deficiencies in the proper organization of IDP Councils' work and what external assistance they need, respondents most frequently mentioned the urgent need for continuous additional training.**

**The following training areas were mentioned as relevant:**

**Grant writing** – It was understood that IDP Councils cannot and should not write grant applications; but for effective work and cooperation with local self-government, NGOs, and foundations, it is important to understand how to write them and what happens afterward.

**Document management** – IDP Council members often lack prior experience in managing documents and drafting minutes, which significantly complicates their work and creates additional difficulties.

**Budget management** – IDP Councils are not obligated to manage budgets, but understanding and being able to analyze budgets is necessary for effective consultation and advocacy.

**Advocacy.**

**General training for newly established IDP Councils** – It is important to understand the initial steps, the tools necessary for work, how to conduct strategic sessions, etc.

**Social media management** – This and more, generally, effective communication with partners, authorities, and target audiences.

**Fundraising school** – Again, it was understood that this skill lies outside the scope of IDP Councils, but understanding fundraising is necessary for more productive collaboration with local self-government bodies and partners.

**Team building and management** – These skills are required to ensure IDP Council members have a high level of activity, engagement, and motivation.

**Conflict sensitivity training and conflict management.**

**Burnout prevention training.**

**Legal consulting assistance** – This assistance would help IDP Council members interpret laws.

*"Our IDP Council was established after the advocacy training had already taken place, but this knowledge is essential to communicate our recommendations to local authorities effectively."*

*"We established the IDP Council and developed a strategic plan, but what do we do next, where do we go? We would like to have some practical guidance."*

*"We set up a Facebook page for our IDP Council, where we post useful information and upcoming events, but it has few followers, and we don't know how to promote this page properly. Such knowledge would help us reach a bigger share of our target audience."*



### **Attitudes towards creating a civic coordination organization to unite efforts at the national level**

**During the consultations, it became apparent that most participants had a positive assessment of creating a civic coordination organization. However, they also expressed certain concerns:**

- » There is worry that such an organization **might exist only on paper and not function effectively.**
- » Some fear that the organization would **lack significant influence and leverage** to effectively communicate the issues and needs of IDP Councils to authorities.
- » Not everyone understood how such an organization could **coordinate the efforts of over 1,000 IDP Councils of varying levels and scales.**

*"The idea sounds very good and useful, but what matters most is to ensure that such an organization doesn't become just another layer of bureaucracy without providing real benefits."*



### **What is expected from a civic organization for coordinating IDP Councils?**

**Among all the opinions and suggestions expressed, several key expectations of what the organization would provide stood out:**

1. Providing IDP Councils with educational materials, organizing training sessions and expert workshops on various topics, and offering courses for both beginners and those who already have some experience and wish to enhance their skills or expand their knowledge.
2. Assistance in coordinating efforts between IDP Councils at different levels and across different localities/oblasts for: sharing experiences, pooling efforts for developing and implementing joint programs, and monitoring the work of IDP Councils.
3. Creating a unified online resource/portal that would host educational materials, useful information, event listings for IDP Council members, new laws related to IDPs and their interpretations, and more.

4. Facilitating communication between IDP Councils and the government, amplifying the voice of the IDP Councils.
5. Creating a directory of potential partners for collaboration, which is particularly relevant for newly established IDP Councils.
6. Establishing and mediating communications between IDP Councils and non-governmental organizations.
7. Assistance in creating and implementing an effective mechanism to attract active and enthusiastic members to IDP Councils.
8. Organizing offline meetings/roundtables involving IDP Council members and high-level officials.
9. Engaging foreign partners to share experience exchanges, training, and potential project funding.
10. Establishing a single hotline for quick consultative assistance.

*"There is a great need for something like a Wikipedia for IDP Council members, where all the necessary information can be found in one place."*

*"It would be useful to have these coordination meetings for all IDP Councils and separate meetings with government representatives at least once every six months, but even that might not be enough—perhaps every few months would be better."*

### ***Opinions on how the legal status of such an organization would differ.***

The opinions of the study participants were divided regarding the legal status of such an organization. There was no consensus on how this organization should be properly established, as many had never considered this aspect and lacked the relevant knowledge.

During the discussion, however, most leaned toward the idea that it should either be a non-governmental organization or something akin to a charitable foundation. The reasoning behind this preference is that such an organization should be able to attract donors to fund the needed training and to assist IDP Councils in meeting the needs of communities.

An alternative view was that it should be a division within a government entity (i.e., in the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine). However, this option carries certain risks. The government may lack the necessary funding, and there could be too many bureaucratic processes hindering effective work.

*"But the most important thing is not the form of the organization, but that it actually works."*

*"It should be organized in a way that allows this coordination organization to attract funding and apply for grants."*



### **The issue of membership in such an organization**



does not have a clear answer. Study participants generally lacked an understanding of how this coordination body could be established. However, there were several points on which IDP Council members generally agreed:

- » This organization should include active representatives of IDP Councils from each oblast, as well as representatives of government bodies and NGOs working with IDPs.
- » These members should have higher education and professional skills in fields such as law, management, social work, education, psychology, and other specialized areas necessary for the organization's work.
- » Priority should be given to candidates with the relevant qualifications, preferably to IDPs.
- » Candidates should have experience working in IDP Councils or in projects related to IDP issues.

*"I have been leading a non-governmental organization since 2015, and we have been working with IDPs all this time, but I am not an IDP myself. I think the key is experience and involvement."*

*"I am confident that, among IDPs, there are many professionals with the necessary experience, so we should look for candidates among them."*



### **The process of selecting candidates for membership**

in such a coordination organization confused participants, making it difficult for them to propose fair and transparent selection mechanisms. A competitive selection process seems irrelevant since all work in the IDP Councils is done on a volunteer basis, and the participants have little understanding of how such a process would work.

*"I think there should be financial support for such membership because if it is also a volunteer activity, it is unclear where to find the time and energy to work, be an active IDP Council member, and participate in a national-level organization."*



### ***The structure of the governing bodies for a non-governmental organization***



coordinating IDP Councils should resemble that of charitable foundations. Participants' understanding of this structure is vague and uncertain since they find it difficult to imagine such an organization as a whole.

IDP Council members were undecided about the number of participants and specific departments within a coordination body. They agreed that the organization should not be too large but that all oblasts of Ukraine should be represented.



### ***Participants in the study are interested in becoming members***

of such an organization. IDP Council members want to be involved in a national-level organization, seeing it as an opportunity for personal development, sharing experiences, gaining additional useful knowledge, and building connections that can be used in their work. However, they doubt whether they can simultaneously manage their main job, active membership in their IDP Councils, and membership in a coordination body. Adequate compensation could serve as additional motivation.

*"This is very interesting, but I'm not sure I have enough experience—maybe later."*

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## Conclusions and Recommendations

**The study showed that IDP Council members do not object to creating a national coordination body for IDP Councils.**

**They see the potential for this body to enhance the effectiveness of IDP Councils, provide opportunities for personal development, increase motivation, and encourage the more active involvement of local authorities and officials.**

All participants recognized the importance of a transparent mechanism for selecting members for the coordination body and ensuring the equal representation of all oblasts. However, the coordination body should not become excessively large or have complicated communication. Participants believed that paying a fixed salary to its members would help increase motivation.

### Recommendations:

- » Facilitate experience exchange between IDP Councils at different levels and in different regions through offline meetings and guest visits.
- » Organize dialogues between IDP Council representatives and public authorities.
- » Create an online resource with a knowledge base and training for IDP Council members, along with current news and announcements of specialized events.
- » Assist in attracting and collaborating with non-governmental organizations, charitable foundations, and international partners.





Consultations were conducted by the Charitable Foundation "Stabilization Support Services" in August 2024.

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