**Integrating a Mixed-Method Toolkit to Measure the Success of Civil Society Organization (CSO) Reform Coalitions**

*How can you creatively combine different methodologies to measure the success of CSO coalitions? Over the past 2.5 years a civil society strengthening project in Ukraine been providing support to CSO reform coalitions to ensure more effective advocacy and greater engagement of citizens in promotion of democratic reforms in Ukraine. The project piloted a mixed-methods approach to track overall performance and the impact of six CSO coalitions. The project creatively combined a series of different methodologies: ONA (Organizational Network Analysis), member satisfaction surveys, stakeholder interviews, performance monitoring, a 42-criteria self-assessment checklist, the Network Performance Index (NPI) and a “sectoral” ONA. This presentation shares the toolkit used to measure the different dimensions of a coalitions’ performance with a particular emphasis on how the different methodologies worked together to provide a stronger assessment of CSO coalition successes.*

There has been enough progress in developing approaches for measuring CSO network and coalition internal capacity. But in terms of their impact and overall success, there is still room for further evaluative interventions. This toolkit has been successful in shining a light on the short- and long-term success of coalitions, as well as their ability to benefit the culture of cooperation within the civil society sector.

In this poster presentation, the term “network” is applied to a set of interrelated nonprofit organizations grouped around shared values and connected to each other by different types of relations (informational exchange, resource sharing, cooperation, mentoring and coaching etc). In contrast, a CSO coalition is seen as an action-driven CSO network aimed at achieving of a specific, mainly advocacy purpose. Capacity and impact are seen as two facets of a coalition’s success. The experience with capacity building of local reform coalitions showed that these two components are closely intertwined and exerting mutual and immediate influence upon each other. Hence, criteria for measuring success of coalitions as advocacy initiatives striving for political and social changes can be divided into internal and external ones depending on the dimension where value has been added:

1) To the cohesiveness&connectivity (multiplexity, mutuality and density of ties) and internal capacity (adaptiveness, sustainability, leadership, vision) of an “action-network” itself;

2) To the social change in its whole and particularly to achieving the overall goal (community capacity, interest intermediation, empowerment, civic engagement, visibility and recognition, advocacy mobilization and impact on policy change).

Both internal and external dimensions of coalitions success/performance have tangible evidences that can be traced. For instance, *Connectivity* is all about ties in the network and *Capacity* is about the organizational health of an entity and its management capacity. The external group of criteria refers to the tangible results for the wider public and can be considered as impact and outcomes of a coalition’s performance. As another example, the criterion *Recognition and Visibility* refers to the reputation and some sort of symbolic capital, it accumulates the value that can be converted into the leveraging advantage in the political and social spheres.

This poster presentation shares the tested toolkit—consisting of 7 complementary tools—designed for measuring different dimensions of coalitions’ performance, explained and illustrated by findings from a one-year evaluation of local reform coalitions in six cities in Ukraine. Utilizing this approach allowed the project not only to measure success of reform coalitions and their potential to sustain, but also to encourage them to start drafting capacity development plans. Therefore, the toolkit provides a basis for a broader approach to network/coalition strengthening.

The toolkit includes:

* **Organizational Network Analysis (ONA)** and **re-ONA** measures cohesion inside the Network and refers to the Network’s ties. The ONA tool has shown itself as significantly helpful in visualizing the networks in dynamics, detecting internal changes regarding informational exchange, cooperation, and resource sharing over time and developing recommendations for network strengthening.
* **Online member satisfaction survey** among all-members of a coalition measures level of participation in a coalition’s work, value of membership, quality of internal coordination and communication, and member CSOs’ views regarding overall effectiveness of a coalition’s performance;
* **Interviews with stakeholders** regarding coalition’ high-level outcomes complement the understanding of a coalition’s performance and impact;
* **Performance data analysis** based on respective projects’ outputs allows to get quantitative data, that reflect the impact of success: media monitoring numbers, the number of citizens engaged into activities, and durable products produced (applications, videos, platforms) etc.;
* **Self-Assessment checklist** of 42 assessment criteria measures coalition’s performance and covers such domains as level of online and offline citizen engagement, visibility and credibility, advocacy capacity and internal coalition capacity. The Checklist is filled by coalition’ members during a workshop;
* **Network Performance Index** **(NPI)** tracks change at the organizational level across the four domains (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability) and eight sub-areas (member satisfaction; standards; delivery; member services; target population; learning, resources and social capital). the NPI tool was designed by Pact for networks/coalitions in the likeness of the Organizational Performance Index (OPI).
* **Sectoral ONA (**Snowball method, un-bounded type of survey**)** investigates a coalition’s positioning within civil society sectors regarding ties of cooperation, desired cooperation, informational exchange, and offline networking.

This mixed-method toolkit is designed not to stand alone for assessment needs only, but to be naturally integrated into coalitions’ strengthening approaches. The data generated by this toolkit shines a light on building coalitions’ potential to serve as powerful agents of change who have a great impact on community development. This approach can be utilized both by donors and organizations themselves for continuing assessment and capacity development needs.