



Profile of the NGO

NGO "STEP" was registered as Zaporizhzhia Youth City NGO in 2009. Since then, the organization has been actively participating in the civic processes at the local and regional level.

We cooperate with the communities, local governments, and NGOs to achieve our Mission: to promote partnerships between different stakeholders at the local, regional, and national levels to build a cultured, democratic, capable, and human-oriented society.

Our focus

Since 2015: *strengthening civil society organizations and local democracy, facilitating social dialogue at the local level, cooperation with amalgamated territorial communities, supporting local development projects, and civic initiatives.*

After the decentralization processes started in Ukraine, STEP has been using its expertise and raised grant funds to support local communities in their democratic, inclusive, human-oriented development. Our partners are both local NGOs with a strong demand to make their communities better, and governments that are motivated to transparent decision-making and citizen participation in development processes. We work in rural areas and small cities, which usually have less access to international funds and cooperation opportunities.

2009 – 2015: *youth initiatives, advocacy campaigns, public monitoring at the local and regional levels, anti-corruption activities.*

It is the period of the NGO's active participation in youth policy at the regional level, including membership in the Zaporizhzhia Youth City Council. Besides, STEP performed joint projects with the *EIDOS Centre for Political Studies and Analysis* (monitoring and advocacy campaigns). In 2012, STEP was a member of the Ukrainian NGOs' coalition for civic monitoring of the activity of tender committees and public procurement (with a focus on Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions).

Activity portfolio (Main projects in 2017-2020)

January–September 2020 *Launching a free legal aid system and strengthening the legal capacity of residents in Shyroke community* funded by International Renaissance Foundation, **UAH 333,480**
STEP used the grant support to organize the pilot system of free legal aid in 27 villages of Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine. The project activities involved onsite consultations with legal experts, legal advice campaign in local media, and launching a legal aid helpline for rural residents. Performed in cooperation with Shyroke rural amalgamated territorial community.

Since November 2019 *Strengthening Local Democratic Governance* funded by NED, **USD 32,000**
With renewed Endowment support, we continued promoting civic engagement and democratic governance in Zaporizhzhia and expanded the project into three more regions of Eastern Ukraine – Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk. STEP cooperates with local NGOs to reinforce civic engagement in the decentralization process, address local concerns, and establish civic education platforms. By September 1, 25 activists from partner organizations completed an online training program, conducted local research, and developed action plans for civic engagement in their communities. They also started 8 micro-projects that include participatory events and information campaigns.



2018–2019 Strengthening Democratic Governance II funded by NED, **USD 28,000**

The project contributed to the capacity and engagement of local civic platforms in Zaporizhzhia region. Ten territorial communities participated in the project. Their representatives built the project teams from both activists and local government officials for joint training and further cooperation. They provided information and advocacy campaigns, established new civil society organizations, and promoted the existing NGOs to address local concerns.

- Successful implementation of 8 local initiatives in partnership of activists and local governments (civic engagement, youth participation, participatory decision-making, etc.).
- 40+ local events, held in 14 towns and villages of Zaporizhzhia region.
- 2000+ participants and attendants of local events (training, public consultations, forums and mini-festivals, volunteer actions, informational events).
- 1200+ respondents of local surveys.

2017–2018 Strengthening Democratic Governance funded by NED, **USD 36,045**

The project was launched to promote civic engagement and democratic governance in amalgamated communities of Zaporizhzhia region. STEP used the Endowment grant to support local initiatives that reinforce civic engagement in the decentralization process and address urgent local concerns. About 60 activists and local government officials from 10 communities gained the basic knowledge of project management, fundraising, and public oversight and developed their cooperation and communication skills with stakeholders.

- Successful implementation of 9 local initiatives in partnership between NGOs and local governments (establishing public councils, trainings for activists and youth, campaigns on promoting e-democracy and participatory budgeting).
- 50+ local events, held in 20 villages and towns of Zaporizhzhia region (trainings, forums, round tables, focus groups, mini-festivals). They engaged 650+ people.
- Project participants registered three NGOs. After the project, they started their own initiatives, and now are working actively with local stakeholders.
- In Shyroke community, the Honourable Council (Povazhna Rada) was also established as the village council's public body.

2017–2018 Community Center for Urban Development "Zmistovno" funded by Initiatives of the Infrastructure Program for Ukraine (GIZ GmbH), **EUR 10,855**

The project was designed to promote participatory budgeting in Zaporizhzhia and cooperation between the city residents, the local government, and other urban development stakeholders.

- To provide Public Lectures on Urban Development, STEP involved eight lecturers, including Zaporizhzhia's cultural activists, experts on participation from Kyiv and Poltava (EIDOS Centre, PAUCI Foundation), and the expert on urban development, GIZ consultant Lukas Born from Germany. The lectures were held in city parks, particularly of Zaporizhzhia's remote districts, to engage more isolated city residents in their communities.
- Nearly 300 citizens participated in other educational events, such as the school for moderators of participatory budgeting, seminars on proposals writing, and the final forum. They obtained the information on the main stages and procedures of participatory budgeting, learned the successful practices of other cities, and developed their project writing skills.

2017 Youth Councils in the amalgamated territorial communities, provided in collaboration with *Fundacja Mapa Pasji* (Poland), funded by the Polish-American Foundation for Freedom within RITA program "Changes in the Region", **UAH 95,800**

The project consisted of training for young activists in rural communities and assisting them in establishing youth councils in three rural communities of Zaporizhzhia region. The Polish-Ukrainian project team prepared the Youth Council Development Guide, which is available online.



Earlier projects

2016 *The Government is Our Common Goal. Civil Dialogue in South-Eastern Ukraine*, provided in collaboration with NGO Fundacja Miejsc i Ludzi Aktywnych (Poland). STEP organized training for local officials and activists, managed small sub-grant projects in 10 communities of Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv and Kherson regions and conducted the interregional conference "Public Dialogue in Ukraine – on the path between struggle and indifference."

2015–2016 *Advocacy Campaign for the Implementation of the New Anti-corruption Legislation by Local Authorities* supported by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Ukraine.

To promote anti-corruption reform, NGOs from 5 regions of Ukraine created the Coalition for Transparent Council and developed the methodology to evaluate local governments' regulations. STEP provided the analysis of regulations of 8 local governments in Zaporizhzhia region.

2015 *Public monitoring of the right to education for internally displaced persons* funded by the International Renaissance Foundation. Conducting a sociological study "Supporting the needs and implementation of IDPs' rights", developing proposals for addressing the topical issues.

2014 *Public anti-corruption control for increasing financial transparency and budgetary accountability of local health departments in Zaporizhzhia region*, provided in collaboration with the EIDOS Centre, funded by the International Renaissance Foundation.

2013–2014 *Know to Act!* This project of the EIDOS Centre was funded by the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine. As a regional partner in Zaporizhzhia, STEP provided a monitoring campaign on local budgeting, tender activities, implementation of the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Public information".

2013–2014 *Functional Survey of Local Authorities to Increase the Effectiveness of the State Gender Policy* funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Ukraine.

2011 *Public monitoring as a basis for the transparency of public procurement* funded by the International Renaissance Foundation.

Partnerships

Since 2017, the NGO collaborates with the PAUCI Foundation (www.pauci.org) experts within various projects. In January 2020, STEP was a partner of The International Forum of Participation Practitioners held in Poltava, Ukraine, and provided by PAUCI and the PLEDDG Project.

Since 2018, we have a memorandum on cooperation with Shyroke amalgamated territorial community (Shyroke village council, Zaporizhzhia region) and already implemented several joint projects, in particular, those aimed at the improvement of local policies, civic engagement, youth participation, supporting primary health care facilities in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2010, STEP is a regional partner of the Centre of Political Studies and Analytics EIDOS (eng.eidos.org.ua) in Zaporizhzhia. Has the successful experience of joint projects (2011-2015).

We cooperate with **local and regional NGOs** – Zaporizhzhia branch of the All-Ukrainian Initiative Active Community (Insitute Respublica), Insitute for Civil Development "Ortega y Gasset", YES, Impulse UA. Have memorandum on cooperation with 8 NGOs operating in Zaporizhzhia, Dnipro, Kharkiv region within Strengthening Democratic Governance project (signed in 2020).

Transparency

The information about NGO's total income and expenditure in the previous three years is available at <https://www.stepngo.in.ua/zvity/>. Please, also find our detailed annual activity reports (2019, 2018) in this section of our website.

Selected publications

55 tasks and solutions for active communities and citizens: a practical guide (2019)

<https://www.stepngo.in.ua/55-zavdan-i-rishen-dlia-aktyvnykh-hromad/> (in Ukrainian)

Developing Civil Society in Amalgamated Territorial Communities: a practical guide (2018)

<https://www.stepngo.in.ua/publikatsii/posibnyk-ohs-v-oth/> (in Ukrainian)

Educational materials and guides on topics of civic engagement at the local level

<https://www.stepngo.in.ua/category/statti/>

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