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NEXT GENERATION

# GRANT PROGRAM

**“Citizens and Parliament: Democratic Representation and Effective Interaction in Wartime”**



March-September 2023

**The representative function** is one of the key functions of the parliament. It provides for various formats of both direct and indirect interaction between the MPs of Ukraine and voters, which constitutes an integral part of the exercise of their powers. Such interaction is intended to facilitate the involvement of citizens in the decision-making process; contribute to building trust in the Parliament as an institution; and, increase the legitimacy of decisions developed and adopted by the Parliament.

Currently, at this crucial time for our country, the representative function of the parliament is becoming even more essential, as it is important for every MP and the parliament to keep in touch with citizens, support communities, study their concerns and respond to their needs.

In wartime, legislation is rapidly changing, and many issues arise that require communication with citizens.

To respond to wartime challenges and to consolidate with other stakeholders to address them effectively, **Ukrainian MPs need to closely cooperate with target audiences**, in particular, nongovernmental organizations, local governments, and professional communities. Such interaction requires special approaches.

In response to the wartime challenges and needs, at the end of 2022, **the USAID's RADA Next Generation Program** announced a competition among civil society organizations to participate in **the Citizens and Parliament: Democratic Representation and Effective Interaction in the Wartime Grant Program**.

**The main objectives of the grant program were:**

- build interaction and cooperation between MPs and voters within the constituency or region in the wartime (including targeted communications);
- engage citizens in the decision-making process and the work of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine;
- communicate reforms, study social issues, and find solutions using various tools of parliamentary interaction with citizens, including public consultations.

In total, the **expert committee reviewed 42 applications** from civil society organizations.

**Grant Competition Winners:**

- NGO "Institute Respublica"
- Rivne Regional Organization of NGO "OPORA Civil Network"
- NGO "Agromegapolis"
- NGO "Union for Promotion of Rural Green Tourism Development in Ukraine"
- NGO "Good Community"
- NGO "Society Initiatives Institute"

**Projects were implemented in March-September 2023.**



## PROJECT “PARLIAMENT AND CITIZENS: OPEN DIALOGUE IN THE WARTIME”



### EXECUTER:

NGO “Institute Respublica”

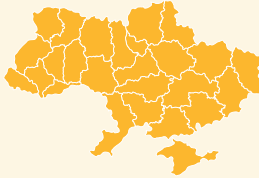
### The following MPs joined:

Olena Shuliak, Viktoriia Podhorna, Dmytro Solomchuk, Oleksandr Fediienko, Alina Zahoruiko, Viktoriia Siumar, Inna Sovsun, Oleksandr Aliksiichuk, Halyna Vasylchenko, Serhii Kozyr, and Anatolii Kostiukh.



### GEOGRAPHY:

all Ukraine



### OBJECTIVE:

to facilitate an open and high-quality dialogue between citizens and MPs of Ukraine to implement changes to legislation to ensure Ukraine recovery and wellbeing of its citizens.



Since 2012, the **NGO “Institute Respublica”** has been involved in numerous activities to encourage citizens to participate in decision-making at both local and national levels; to ensure human rights observance; to implement reforms in Ukraine and introduce good governance standards at the local and national levels; to attract investment and ensure socio-economic development of communities.



## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

**To raise public awareness about the parliament; MP’s functions; methods of interaction between MPs and citizens; to hold discussion of the plan for Ukraine recovery and development in the war and post-war period.**



### RESULTS:

Citizens of different regions of Ukraine have a better understanding of the functions and powers of the parliament and MPs of Ukraine and the vision of Ukraine recovery plan, and articulate their expectations based on this knowledge. We held:

- **10 meetings entitled, “Let’s talk about recovery”**, with participation of MPs and civil society representatives from different regions of Ukraine (209 participants). Participants learned how the activities of the Parliament and MPs have



changed since the full-scale invasion; which areas of Ukraine's recovery require the most attention; what legislative initiatives are being worked on in the area of recovery during the war period; the specifics of working with voters during the war period; and opportunities for engaging citizens in the development and subsequent monitoring of the recovery plan.

- **60 sessions entitled, “Active Community Clubs”**, with participation of 1378 citizens from different regions of Ukraine: Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kirovohrad, Dnipro, Khmelnytskyi, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Donetsk, Cherkasy, Poltava, Chernivtsi, Vinnytsia, Kyiv, Odesa, Rivne, and Sumy. The participants learned about the functions of the parliament; an MP's rights and responsibilities; the formats and tools for interaction between citizens and MPs.
- **Three Schools entitled, “The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and Citizens: How to Establish Closer Interaction”**, with participation of civil society representatives from different regions of Ukraine (92 participants). The participants gained in-depth knowledge of the structure of state power and the interaction of its branches; tools using which citizens can interact with the Parliament and MPs of Ukraine; the instrument of public consultations; use of public consultations as an effective mechanism to make decisions nationwide; advocacy tools.

## 2

**To facilitate the development of a dialogue between MPs and citizens on the development of draft laws on recovery through public consultations.**



### **RESULTS:**

Public consultation practices were developed to engage citizens in the law making processes in the wartime.

**Two public consultations** were held:

- **White Paper on the Legislative Process** (116 participants). Public consultation participants expressed their ideas and suggestions, based on which the White Paper on the Legislative Process will be finalized. This document is created to find ways to solve the problems of legal regulation of the legislative process and issues in the parliamentary practices.
- **Improving the Procedure for Ukrainian Citizens to Receive Compensation for Housing Damaged and Destroyed as a Result of Russia's Armed Aggression Against Ukraine** (73 participants). Based on the suggestions by the public consultation participants, amendments will be made to the relevant Law of Ukraine. The public consultation results will be shared with the relevant government agencies to improve the regulations and ensure search for change agents in the regions of Ukraine.





## PROJECT “PRACTICAL ANALYTICS FOR THE PARLIAMENT”



### EXECUTER:

Rivne Regional Organization of NGO “OPORA Civil Network”

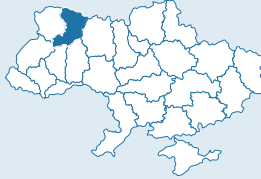
### The following MPs joined:

Oleksandr Aliksiichuk,  
Solomiia Bobrovska,  
Oleksandr Kovalchuk.



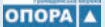
### GEOGRAPHY:

Rivne Oblast



### OBJECTIVE:

to increase citizen participation in the activities of the Parliament by strengthening the analytical capacity of the public sector and holding public consultations.



Since 2006, **Rivne Regional Organization of NGO “OPORA Civil Network”** has been involved in various activities to develop local communities and public oversight; strengthen capacity of nongovernmental organizations; to conduct comprehensive monitoring and analysis of the electoral process and program activities of political parties; to help to overcome humanitarian and social problems caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.



## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

To study the public perception of the role of the parliament in the wartime and voters' requests regarding ways of communication with MPs of Ukraine.



Study



### RESULTS:

- Conducted a **representative survey** of residents of Rivne Oblast (1227 respondents).
- Conducted **expert interviews** (12 experts) to determine the forms and methods of communication and cooperation between MPs of Ukraine and local governments, businesses, and the nongovernmental sector in Rivne Oblast communities.

- **A report with recommendations** for MPs of Ukraine was prepared, presented and disseminated. The recommendations are aimed at increasing citizen engagement, improving interaction and strengthening ties between voters and MPs of Ukraine.

## 2

**To build the analytical capacity of the public to interact with MPs in the legislative process.**



### **RESULTS:**

23 representatives of the active civil society sector in Rivne Oblast received practical training at the Academy of Practical Analytics; strengthened their analytical and advocacy skills to participate in the legislative process, and got acquainted with the work of MPs and their teams.



## 3

**To advocate and implement interaction of MPs with voters in the form of consultations.**



### **RESULTS:**

Three public consultations were held by MPs of Ukraine in cooperation with the graduates of the Academy of Practical Analytics:

- **“Housing Problems of Ukrainians – Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): Help, Support, Solutions”**: the problems related to housing for IDPs living in the Rivne Oblast and possible solutions were identified. Based on the results of the public consultations, proposals will be developed for public authorities to address the housing problems of IDPs more effectively. 264 people took part in the event;
- **“Psychological Support for Military Families in Small Communities: Need and Accessibility”**: information was collected on psychological support needs of military families. In cooperation with psychologists, recommendations will be developed to establish psychological support centers for military families. 184 people took part in the consultations;
- **“Citizens’ Attitudes Towards Legalization of Medical Cannabis in Ukraine, as Proposed by Draft Law No. 7457”**: information was collected on citizens’ attitudes to legalization of medical cannabis and related sensitivities to further develop proposals to improve the draft law. More than 340 people took part in the consultations.



## PROJECT “LVIV INTERACTION PLATFORM”



### EXECUTER:

NGO “Good Community”

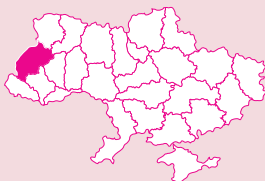
### The following MPs joined:

Pavlo Bakunets, Halyna  
Vasylchenko, Yaroslav  
Rushchyslyn, Yevhen  
Petruniak.



### GEOGRAPHY:

Lviv Oblast



### OBJECTIVE:

to increase the level of interaction between MPs of Ukraine and communities and active citizens to develop legislative solutions for economic development in communities, using the example of Lviv district.



Since 2016, NGO “Good Community” has been engaged in activities to analyze and monitor the community affairs; conduct sociological research and study the problems of various social groups (business, local authorities, and students); and, since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, has been actively assisting the Armed Forces.



## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

To increase the level of community involvement in cooperation with MPs of Ukraine to discuss community issues and jointly find solutions, including at the level of the Parliament.



### RESULTS:

- **MPs held 12 meetings with active representatives of 20 communities in Lviv Rayon** (district), Lviv Oblast (328 participants), including community leaders, business representatives, activists, veterans and other groups of people. During the meetings, they discussed community issues in the areas of finance and economic development, taking into account the wartime challenges; parliamentary control over decisions of local governments; and, support and development of veteran businesses.



- As a result of the meetings, **proposals for amendments to the legislation** on the distribution of personal income tax and the administration of property taxes were developed.
- **A Roadmap for Improving the Interaction of Ukrainian MPs with Communities** was developed.

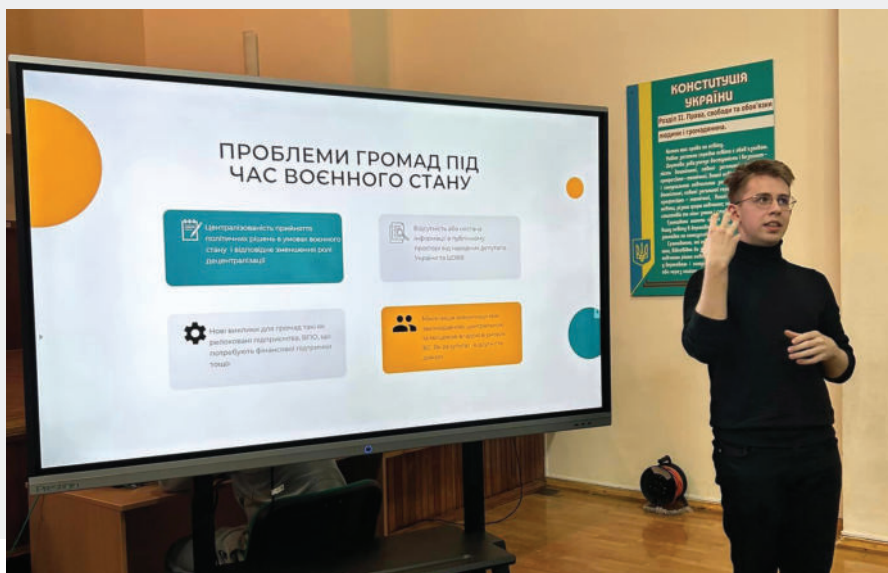
## 2

To exchange best practices of Lviv Rayon communities in cooperation with MPs of Ukraine, economic development of communities, including the work of relocated and veteran businesses, and discussion of community issues and proposals for their solution.



### RESULTS:

- **The Lviv Interaction Platform** project pages were created on Facebook and Instagram, where information about the project and MP - community interaction practices are posted.
- **A map of relocated enterprises and veteran initiatives** was created.
- Three territorial communities of Lviv Rayon adopted the **Declaration on promoting the development of veteran entrepreneurship**.





# PROJECT “PARLIAMENT FOR RURAL AREAS: REPRESENTATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE”



## EXECUTER:

NGO “Union for Promotion of Rural Green Tourism Development in Ukraine”

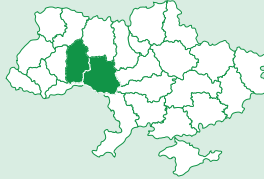
## The following MPs joined:

Larysa Bilozir, Iryna Borzova, Dmytro Nalotov, Ihor Marchuk.



## GEOGRAPHY:

Khmelytskyi Oblast;  
Vinnytsia Oblast



## OBJECTIVE:

to ensure interaction between MPs of Ukraine and constituents who are current and potential providers of rural green tourism and rural hospitality services to create a favorable legal environment in the field of rural hospitality.



Since 1996, the **NGO “Union for Promotion of Rural Green Tourism Development in Ukraine”** has been engaged in activities to develop rural areas; create jobs; diversify agricultural production and revive national culture; and, promote rural green tourism.



## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

To study the problems in the field of rural green tourism in the context of war to develop proposals for their solution, including at the legislative level.



## RESULTS:

- **A survey** of 1,000 respondents was conducted to identify the most critical problems of rural tourism development and study the public awareness of legislation governing rural tourism.
- **4 seminars** entitled, “Legal Regulation. Organization of Rural Tourism Activities. Roadmap for Development of Rural Tourism in the Community,” were held



with the participation of amalgamated territorial community representatives. 148 participants discussed problems and opportunities for the green tourism development in rural communities.

- Based on the data collected, **an analytical review** was prepared to identify existing problems and expectations and suggest ways of addressing them through improving the regulatory framework.
- **The report was presented and discussed** with rural green tourism activists and members of the Ukrainian Parliament.

## 2

### To establish systematic interaction and improve targeted communications between MPs and specialized parliamentary committees with voters.



#### RESULTS:

- **Six consultations** were held in Khmelnytskyi and Vinnytsia Oblasts with the participation of rural tourism service providers, rural household owners, local authorities and teams of Ukrainian MPs. 114 participants discussed problem issues of green tourism development and proposals to the draft law “On Rural Hospitality”.
- Results of the consultations, surveys, and proposals were presented and **discussed with the MPs of Ukraine**.
- The Union representatives submitted **proposals to the draft law “On Tourism”**, in particular, regarding the green tourism development. The proposals were considered by the line parliamentary committee, when finalizing the draft law.
- The Union representatives **joined the working group** to develop the draft law “On Economic Development of Non-industrial Territories of Ukraine”.

## 3

### To develop and advocate for proposals aimed at adopting the draft law “On Rural Hospitality”.



#### RESULTS:

- **A roadmap** to advocate for the adoption of the draft law “On Rural Hospitality” has been developed.
- **The draft law was presented and discussed with MPs of Ukraine**, comments and suggestions were considered, and the advocacy campaign continued.



## PROJECT “EDUCATIONAL DIALOGUE OF LVIV OBLAST”



### EXECUTER:

NGO “Society Initiatives Institute”

### The following MPs joined:

Nataliia Pipa.



### GEOGRAPHY:

Lviv Oblast



### OBJECTIVE:

to improve the interaction of educators with MPs and engage them in reforming the educational process in Ukraine.



ІНСТИТУТ  
СУСПІЛЬНИХ  
ІНІЦІАТИВ

Since 2013, the NGO “**Society Initiatives Institute**” has been working to improve formal education and non-formal education tools in Ukraine by developing strategies for educational institutions and advocating for educational initiatives.



## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

To intensify cooperation with the communities of the Lviv region on educational issues and establish an active dialogue with MPs to improve the educational process in Ukraine.



### RESULTS:

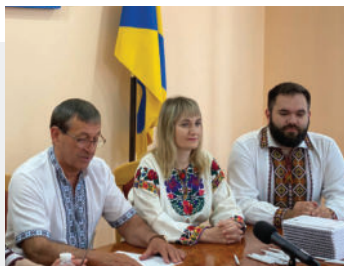
- **12 meetings entitled, “Solutions Workshop”**, were held to request educators to identify existing problems in education and find solutions, as well as to inform them about the forms and tools of cooperation with MPs and involvement in the decision-making process. 245 participants from 73 communities and more than 100 educational institutions in the Lviv Oblast took part in the discussions.
- Based on the results of the meetings, a report summarizing the issues and proposed solutions was prepared. **The report was presented to key stakeholders** for



further consideration, in particular, to develop further legislative initiatives and perform the oversight function by the Ukrainian parliament.

## 2

To create an online platform for educators in the Lviv Oblast to communicate issues related to the organization of the educational process and education reforms, and to engage in decision-making, including at the parliamentary level.



### RESULTS:

- An online tool entitled, “Educator’s Shelf”, was developed to enable educators to quickly find answers to their questions, to download necessary documents and have exchanges about educational initiatives and education reform. These sections have been viewed more than 3500 times, and the documents have been downloaded by more than 100 users.





# PROJECT “HELPING FARMERS IN KHMELNYTSKY OBLAST”



## EXECUTER:

NGO “Agromegapolis”

### The following MPs joined:

Vadym Halaichuk, Oleksii Zhmerenetskyi, Serhii Mandziy, Yurii Zaslavskiy, Ihor Marchuk.



## GEOGRAPHY:

Khmelnyskyi Oblast.



## OBJECTIVE:

to encourage participation of the public and the professional community of agrarians of Khmelnytskyi Oblast in the decision-making process through cooperation with MPs of Ukraine and advocacy campaigns.



Since 2015, the **NGO “Agromegapolis”** has been conducting information and advocacy campaigns in support of Ukrainian farmers, and since the outbreak of the full-scale war, the nongovernmental organization has been studying the needs and problem issues of farmers and helping to address them.

## PROJECT TASKS AND RESULTS:

# 1

To investigate the situation and needs of farmers, agricultural producers, and small entrepreneurs in the Khmelnytskyi Oblast in the wartime.



## RESULTS:

- Through **5 focus groups and in-depth interviews**, we studied the situation and needs of farmers, agricultural producers, and small entrepreneurs in Khmelnytskyi Oblast in the wartime.

# 2

To develop recommendations for solving current problems of the professional community.



Study



## RESULTS:

- **An Analytical Report with recommendations** was prepared. The report was distributed to MPs of Ukraine, line parliamentary committees, local governments, local state authorities, and military enlistment offices.

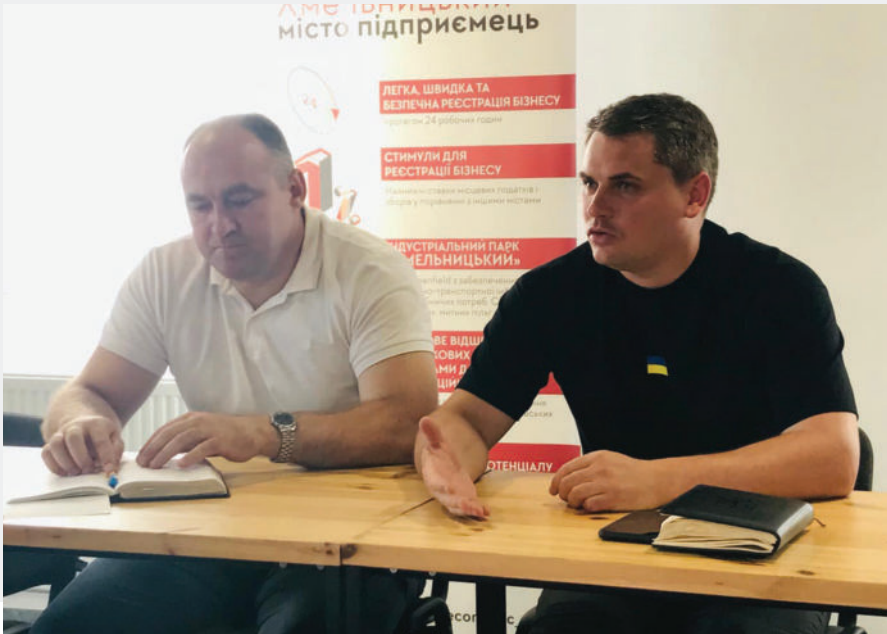
# 3

To hold consultations with members of the Ukrainian Parliament and other stakeholders on the identified problems and solutions.



## RESULTS:

- The report and recommendations were presented, and **two consultations were held with MPs and stakeholders** to find possible solutions to improve the situation and meet the needs of farmers, agricultural producers, and small entrepreneurs in the wartime.
- Together with MP Oleksii Zhmerenetskyi, the organization **developed the report, conclusions and recommendations and submitted them to the Temporary Investigation Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine** to investigate possible violations of Ukrainian legislation by officials of the Bureau of Economic Security of Ukraine, state authorities and other bodies exercising powers in the field of economic security, which could lead to a decrease in revenues to the state and local budgets.



## ABOUT PROGRAM

**The USAID RADA: Next Generation program** is a five-year initiative (2021-2026) implemented by Internews-Ukraine and financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Program's **main goal** is to advance «next generation» reforms that will enable the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) to be a modern, effective, and accountable institution for Ukraine's democratic development.

The Program has **three objectives**:

1

Increase constituent participation in the legislative process, particularly with improved and systematic interaction between MPs and citizens.



2

Strengthen the Verkhovna Rada's analytical and oversight capacities and ensure an end-to-end legislative process.



3

Introduce innovative digital and communication solutions into the Verkhovna Rada's work.



### Contacts:

**Lesia Nechyporenko,**

Lead on Parliamentary Representation, USAID RADA: Next Generation Program

[Lnechyporenko@internews.ua](mailto:Lnechyporenko@internews.ua)

### Program networks:



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