

Post-Covid World – recovery & management

Challenges we have experienced – as communities and as organizations
– and experiences we can use to built on from now ...

A bunch of thoughts and reflections from the discussion about the Covid-times experiences, run at the Global Challenges Local Solutions online workshop with representatives of a few Community Foundations from: Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Bulgaria and the UK.

The biggest challenges for LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- ✚ Sudden **limited access** – due to lockdown - to the vulnerable and marginalized groups, and those living in peripheral areas
- ✚ Broken or very **difficult communication** with people in need, due to restrictions
- ✚ Lack of clear **instructions how to act** – how to help under the circumstances, where to start
- ✚ Growing **exclusion** of people – poor, homeless - with no access to the internet nor electronic devices
- ✚ Exclusion of some children from education system
- ✚ Online tools were a **barrier** for older people
- ✚ Older people had limited access to the medical help
- ✚ Over time the issue of people's **poor mental condition** became significant due to isolation, loneliness and helplessness
- ✚ **Polarization** of some communities as the effect of frustration, tiredness
- ✚ **Failure** of many state institution in carrying support to minorities and vulnerable groups

The challenges for the ORGANIZATIONS THEMSELVES

- ✚ Urgent necessity to **reformulate** programs, **reinvent** activities, plans – to keep the organization going and carry its mission
- ✚ Often 'hands tied to act'
- ✚ Disrupted **contact and relations with donors** in the form used so far
- ✚ Diminished **financial support** from donors – due to limited contact and frequently because of their difficult situation, lack of fundraising events, redirection of funds by companies and other existing donors to urgent life-saving actions related to pandemia
- ✚ Disrupted **communication** within the organization's team > weakened team spirit
- ✚ No spontaneous discussions and creative brainstorm in the office
- ✚ **Burnout, depression** and **fear** of numerous team members as well as volunteers

HOW WE CAN BUILD ON THE EXPERIENCES OF LAST 2 YEARS

- We've learnt **new online tools and technologies**, and that we can **effectively communicate** in so many more ways (diversification) – Zoom, Teams, internet tools - and continue acting together
 - ➡ Now, we can feel secure, that if such circumstances would occur, **we will NOT be disconnected anymore** but quickly switch into online communicators

- Online tools has also **increased the number of ways to communicate** with donors or trustees
 - ➡ It became natural to set arrangements on Zoom, but also have a business talk while going together on the walk – it doesn't have to be in a conference room nor in the office; we are more aware about possibilities to adjust the form to the target group

- We've learnt and felt the **great value of personal meetings** and gatherings
 - ➡ we will **appreciate** and enjoy them even more, as people are eager to meet in person; the quality and power of personal meeting will certainly increase

- We've discovered **outdoor possibilities**
 - ➡ outdoor spaces will become more popular and will be an **alternative for indoor** ones; in case of some crisis, it gives us the perspective of changing the formula of a meeting – by changing the location or, as a last resort, moving it to online platform – instead of canceling it.

- The **trust for social, local organizations has increased**
 - ➡ as many public institutions failed, the NGOs, Community Foundations and other social organizations were the one who have delivered the real help to marginalized, vulnerable and other people in need

- We've learnt about **new roles of Community Foundations**
 - ➡ To **advocate** on political level - to build alliances with local governments
 - ➡ To **initiate** NGOs' coalitions in order to make a pressure on local governments for a good cause
 - ➡ To be a **mediator** for our communities
 - ➡ To **motivate**, keep the spirit and encourage people in the communities to act, learn and grow – even in difficult times

LET'S HOLD ON TO THE GOOD THINGS THAT CAME OUT OF THIS DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE
