



## **The Community Foundation movement in Ukraine - challenges and opportunities**

### **Interview with Volodymyr Sheyhus, ISAR Ednannia**

*ECFI – Tell us a little about the development of the Community Foundation movement in Ukraine?*

VS – The first community foundations in Ukraine were established in 1995. Since then there has been steady development and there are now 33. Implementation of decentralization reform in Ukraine leads to growing influence of local authorities and local self-governments, increased local budgets and the need of local authorities to engage people into the decision-making processes. Here, Community Foundations can step in as they already have necessary knowledge, skills and instruments to engage population, implement projects and administer grant-programs. Community Foundations can offer their assistance, mechanisms and approaches to be used for running activities, community development and civic engagement. Community Foundations in Ukraine are actively using Donor Circles and Giving circles in their activities. Music Camp International is one more quite popular tool to engage community members into the life of their community with the help of music.

*ECFI – What does ISAR do to support the development of the movement?*

VS – Ednannia, that stands for "unity" – our philosophy and mission are really embodied in the title of our organization. We want to inspire innovation and invest in agents of change. Our vision is for the community as a self-regulating system, co-created by all community members, where everyone has a right to express his/her opinion, offer solutions, and be creative. We believe that we can make our life together better by creating new traditions of professionalism, benevolence and proactivity. Community foundations can coordinate processes of engagement and direct funds into areas that need most support. We help this process through applying international learning;

analysing trends in society; training, coaching and mentoring; promoting community foundations in Ukraine and abroad; helping establish pilot community foundations; and through the provision of financial support.

*ECFI – What are the main challenges that you and community foundations face?*

VS – Probably the biggest challenge remains the passiveness of people and institutions (e.g. local authorities). It is difficult to find people willing to commit to playing a role in the Board – even in areas where Youth Bank has been successful there is the issue that often young people who have already been involved leave their local community for further education or employment. In addition there are, as everywhere, challenges around financial stability and sustainability. Some interesting connections with business are being developed to help ensure their charitable giving is systematic, efficient and effective – through community foundation administered corporate funds, offering a win-win for the local community and the corporation.