



INFLUENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Understanding SCSO Ukraine

Accountability is one of the central pillars of 'governance': the ability of citizens to voice and demand those in positions of power to justify their actions. This ability comprises many things, but most importantly the ability – the freedom, the space, the right – of all citizens equally to channel their demands: to 'influence' for change

The SCSO programme, implemented by Crown Agents and International Alert, considers governance in terms of how influence and accountability play out. It requires a capable and responsive State, a civil society that can cooperate with but at the same time hold the State to account, and influence for change. This suggests that it is through constructive engagement between civil society and the State (i.e., government) that citizens' demands for a better future are best done through influencing and accessing individuals, institutions, operations, processes etc. In this way 'influence work' for greater accountability is closely associated with the role of civil society.

What is civil society to SCSO Ukraine?

For many people the term 'civil society' (CS) is synonymous with CSOs, NGOs and CBOs. Though such groups may constitute a visible core, this segment of society is far broader, comprising also of the media, trade unions, professional associations, academic/research bodies, women's organisations, veterans' organisations, youth movements, faith-based groups, self-help groups, charities, voluntary associations, development agencies, etc. In Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada, in addition to their part in defining principles of internal and external policy, may be considered part of civil society in view of their key role in holding leaders, governments, and public organisations to account on behalf of citizens.

CSSF Political Access and Influence Approach

Towards improving governance in Ukraine CSSF is committed to strengthening influence and accountability through the role of civil society. Change in Ukraine during conflict is hard to implement and assess, but experience shows change has occurred when people at different levels in different segments of society act collectively to address a specific issue – a collective problem – in ways powerful enough to challenge the status quo, preferably in a more inclusive and democratic manner. Such 'alliances' leading to an alignment of interests between key groups and individuals in CS and the State, as well as the private sector, often prove strong enough to tip the balance in favour of a change.

The challenge of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Recovery of Ukraine

SCSO is particularly keen to draw attention to the diverse experiences of women and marginalised groups in the context of the current war. We also want to make the case for why we think it is vital to promote the participation and leadership of women and marginalised groups in recovery and reconstruction efforts.

History has shown us that in times of conflict, women are disproportionately impacted by risks such as poverty, exploitation, violence and abuse, as the conditions of war intensify the impacts of pre-existing gender inequalities. In many instances, gender also intersects with other factors such as age and disability status to intensify marginalisation and vulnerability to harm. In conflict, and times of uncertainty it can also create transformative spaces for change in gendered norms and dynamics in a society, and that these can be "turning points" in civil society-state relationships.

Accountability, responsiveness and capability in civil society can be weak, when it comes to political access, influence and voicing the interests of women and marginalised citizens. A strong civil society, allied with the political will of decision makers, expertise and analysis, is essential to make recovery gender¹-sensitive.



What is SCSO?

The Support to Civil Society (SCSO) Programme in Ukraine is a £10 Million governance programme funded by the FCDO with a timeframe from June 2022 – March 2024. It has a central focus on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). The combination of governance and GESI means that the programme seeks to influence women and marginalised groups priorities through civil society active approaches towards influencing key actors and interests, as well as demonstrating a meaningful contribution to results for women and marginalised groups.

The outcome of the programme is SCSO supported CSOs demonstrate more effectiveness in demanding and influencing better performance from state actors and holding state actors to account.

SCSO Programme Approach

The SCSO grants to civil society (CS) partners focus on recovery and reconstruction with a good governance and GESI approach. This means all projects funded are working with a good governance model of state – civil society engagement and interaction around key recovery needs and issues, that support women and marginalised groups (i.e. Internally Displaced People; Roma population; youth; Veterans; People Living with Disabilities; elderly; LGBTQIA+). SCSO concentrates on activities at the national and local government level, where CS partners will implement activities for example in health rehabilitation, state services and system support to internally displaced, veterans and disabled, also human rights and child rights focus, policy advocacy and monitoring of recovery processes that are inclusive. SCSO grant partners work on key recovery issues to demonstrate effective approaches that can enhance and strengthen state systems and processes. SCSO's philosophy is to work with our CS partners from 'behind the scenes' and support them in building a model where local actors lead the process, demonstrate effectiveness and look to replicate, scale up and sustain positive outcomes.

Strategic capacity support and strengthening

SCSO is grounded in the lesson that within civil society work grants alone does not lead to transformational change. Instead, it is through a combination of funds, capacity strengthening and strategic relationships around issues that can support a local model of civil society – state engagement that brings about system reform.

SCSO works to ensure that GESI priorities are front and centre, and that the CS partner intervention is contextually tailored to work with local stakeholders to understand the problem and bottlenecks to identify solutions and collaborate on the possibilities to drive change forward. Aspects of SCSO capacity strengthening combine:

1. organisational development for CS partners,
2. partnership building and networking
3. convening learning and bringing CS partners together to create opportunities for interaction and dialogue among a diverse group working on GESI issues,
4. encourage and ensure state side interaction in the process
5. facilitate strategic learning workshops to identify how change happens and following through on recommendations.

Learning and effectiveness

For SCSO Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning is key so that the programme can understand the effectiveness and capability of CS partners in influencing change and their ability to adapt to conflict contextual challenges and opportunities that arise. As well, to work with CS partners to follow through on learning and strategise on where others champions and actors who are tackling similar issues for long term impact may be useful.

¹GESI aims to promote gender equality and social inclusion by addressing existing disparities and gaps in access and control over resources, services, information and opportunities and the distribution of power and decision making.



The follow table below presents the current portfolio of the civil society grant partners supported by the SCSO programme. The three maps below provide a geographical understanding of where our partners work.

Funding Window	Total Opportunity Budget	Number of grantees	Start date	Duration	Closing date (all project activities)
Emergency Grant Window	773, 255 GBP	94	Jul 27, 2022	14 months	Sep 2023
Programme Window II Recovery & Reconstruction	2,404,590 GBP	14	Feb 6, 2023	Ongoing	Feb-March 2024
Programme Window III Resilience & Sustainability	1,349,088 GBP	20	Mar 16, 2023	Ongoing	March-April 2024

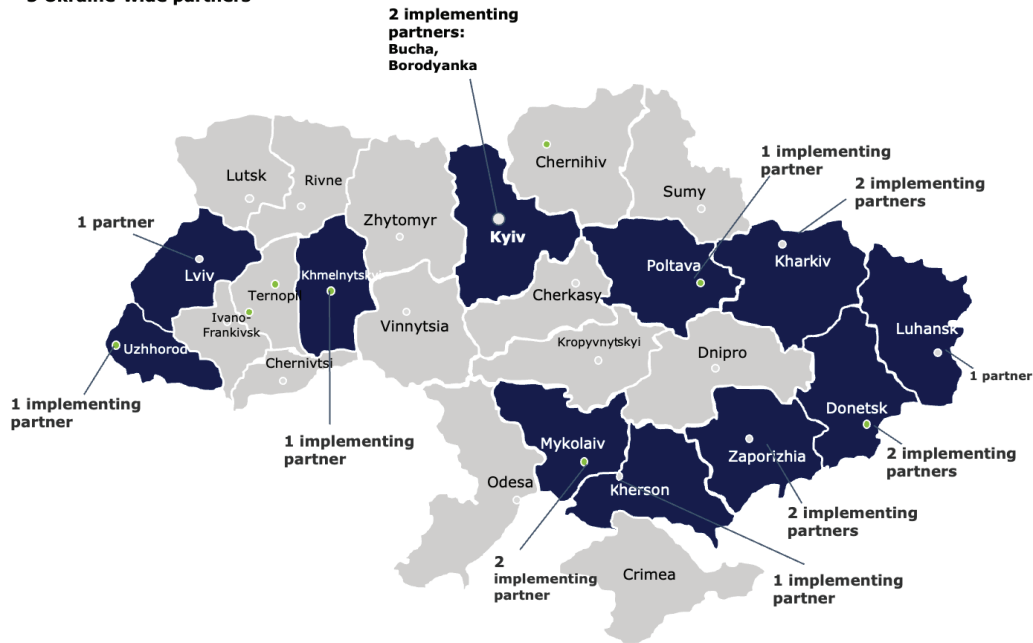
Emergency Grant Window Geography





Program Window II: Recovery and Reconstruction

5 Ukraine-wide partners



Program Window III: Resilience and Sustainability (project implementation geography)



6 Ukraine-wide partners