

- Support NPO Sector Adaptability to Covid-19 Emergency - Assessment Report

The emergency situation of Covid-19 brought a series of uncertainties for the non-for-profit sector with regard to their funding stream (public or private, local or international) and the social distancing rules under which the country operates, made the entire operations very challenging.

During the week of 23 March, Partners Albania for Change and Development and the National Resource Centre for Civil Society in Albania launched a quick assessment of the situation, along with a public appeal to the donor community in the country to react to the situation with more flexibility and targeted support.

The assessment was considered as an instrument to see:

1. What is the impact of the situation on the activities of the sector? It may be helpful to orient the supporters of the sector in their actions and reactions.
2. What donors can do to bring more clarity and security under the current funding agreements with the sector? It is important for the sector to planning ahead by revising and adjusting their work processes accordingly.
3. What type of current services and products have the potential to be oriented to online platforms?
4. What are the specific needs with regard to access to and working skills with online tools? Online work is vastly the only way to carry out the activity during this emergency situation, and the non-for-profit sector is not very strong in IT solutions. Needs identified to this regard, may inform the donors' decisions about their support during this period.

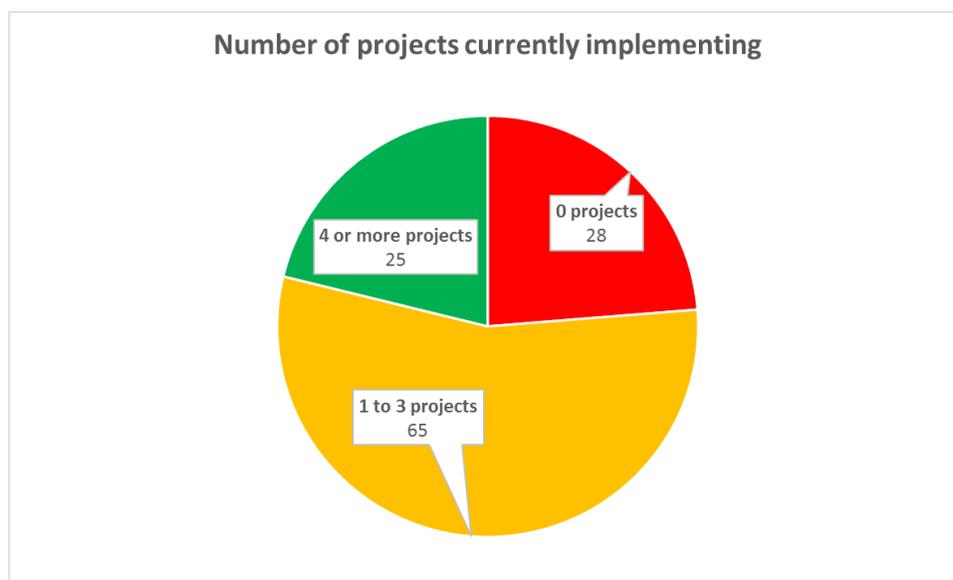
In addition, the information collected on the needs to access online tools (point 4), was meant to orient Partners Albania and NRC programmatic work and help with the design of a support package for the sector. [Find here](#) our assistance to this regard.

CSO Respondents

Total of CSOs respondents were 118 CSOs – 22 Tirana based and 75 from 37 municipalities in 12 regions.

1 local government institution and 1 private company were not made part of the analysis.

28 CSOs out of 118 have no project under implementation, 65 CSOs have from 1 to 3 projects and 25 CSOs have over 4 projects.

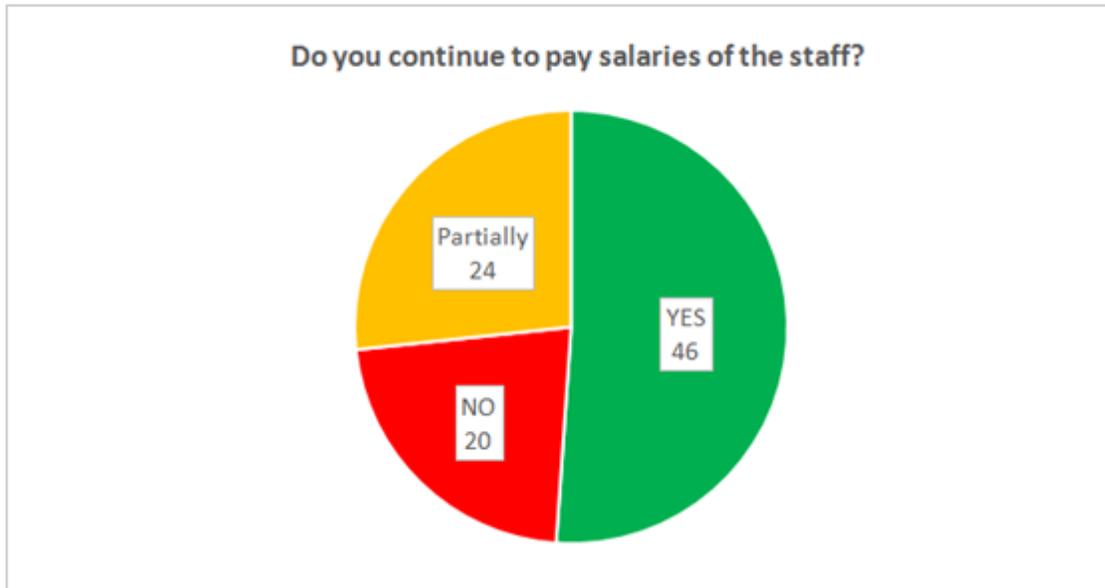


1. What is the impact of the situation on the activities of the sector?

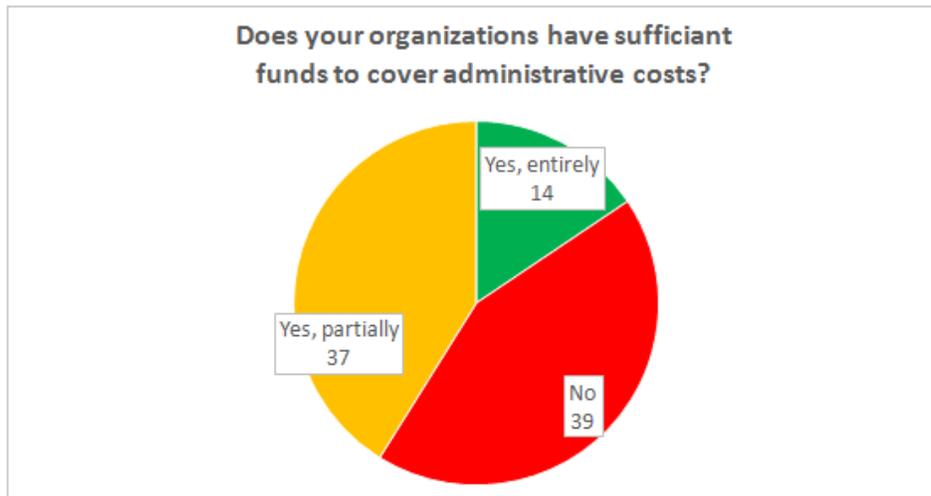
The emergency situation of Covid-19 directly affects the implementation of projects but above all affects the management and organizational sustainability by creating problems with salaries and administrative costs, cost of activities etc.

Despite the difficulties that CSOs are facing with the project management, 46 CSOs state they can pay their staff salaries and 24 CSOs can pay part of the salaries. The situation results more problematic on the coverage of the administrative costs where only 14 CSOs can fully cover these costs and 37 can cover some of the costs.

As results shows, 20 CSOs have no funds for staff salaries and 39 CSOs have no funds to cover the administrative costs. This situation brings many negative implications and raises a big question mark about the continuity of the work of these organizations and endangers their sustainability. Considering so, more flexibility is needed from donors and especially more institutional support for CSOs from their side.



*The result is calculated based on responses of the 90 CSOs who are implementing projects at this moment

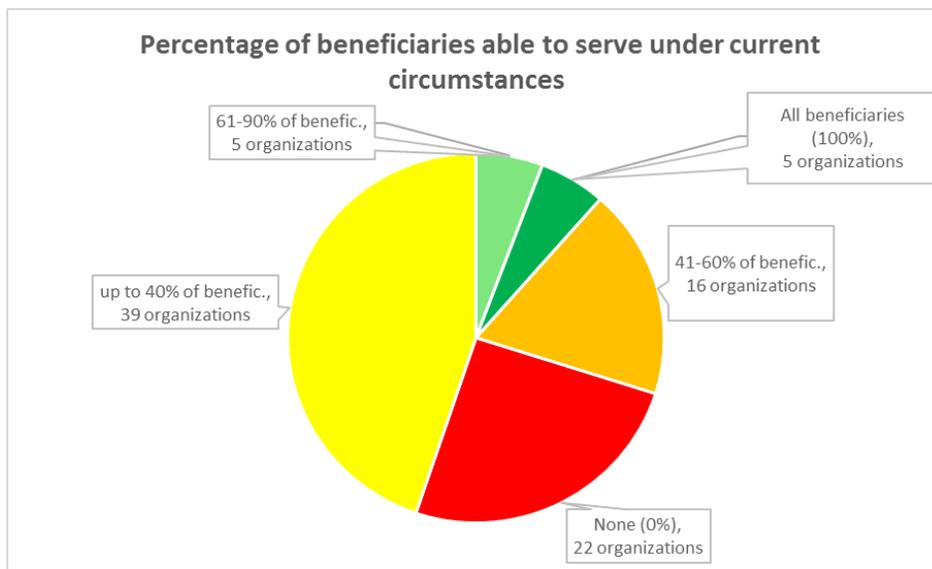


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In the current situation most of CSOs can reach and continue to serve to some extent to their beneficiaries. Only 5 CSOs can reach them fully.

A large number of organizations think that in this situation with the adaptation of the methodology they can manage to serve up to 60% of their beneficiaries. This indicates that rapid adaptation of activity methodology and identification of alternative online methodologies of contacting beneficiaries and providing services to them is imperative.

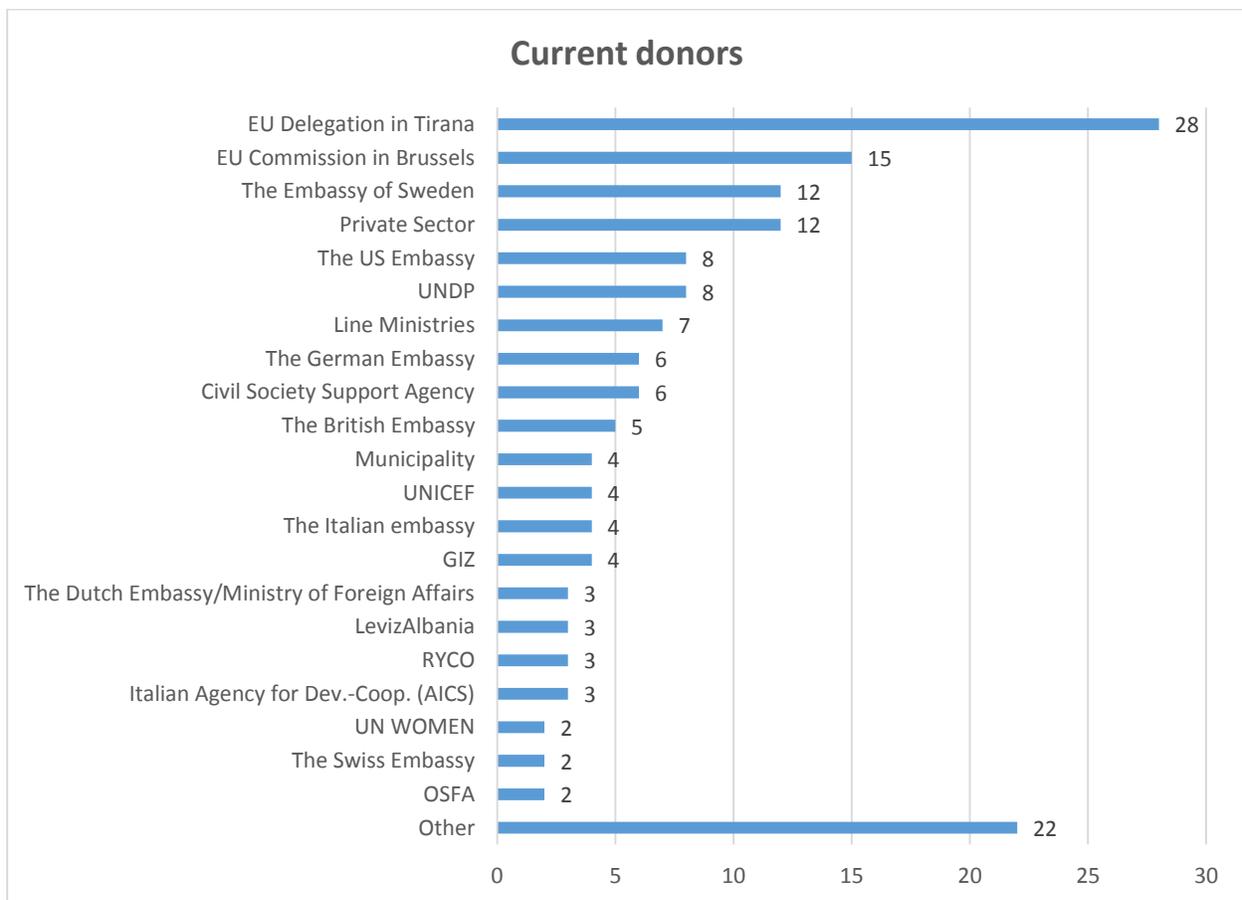
22 CSOs can no longer provide services to their beneficiaries at all.



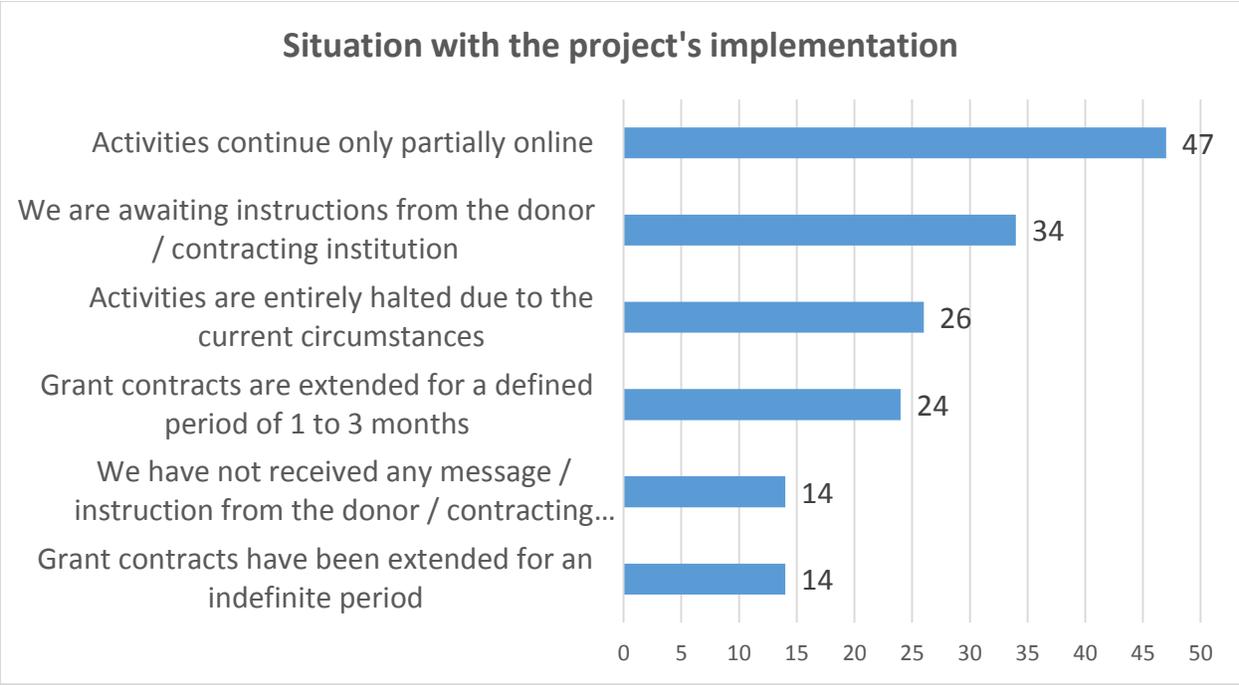
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2. What donors can do to bring more clarity and security under the current funding agreements with the sector? It is important for the sector to planning ahead by revising and adjusting their work processes accordingly?

The pool of CSO respondents work with a large number of donors. Still, as one may expect the main donor remain EU institutions (EU Delegation and European Commission), which are currently funding 43 CSOs. The second largest donor are foreign governments through their embassies in Tirana or Development Cooperation Agencies. And, the third are state institutions through line ministries, local government and AMSHC.



* Multiple choice question. The result is calculated based on responses of the 90 CSOs who are implementing projects at this moment. **Other donors include 22 different donors mentioned only once



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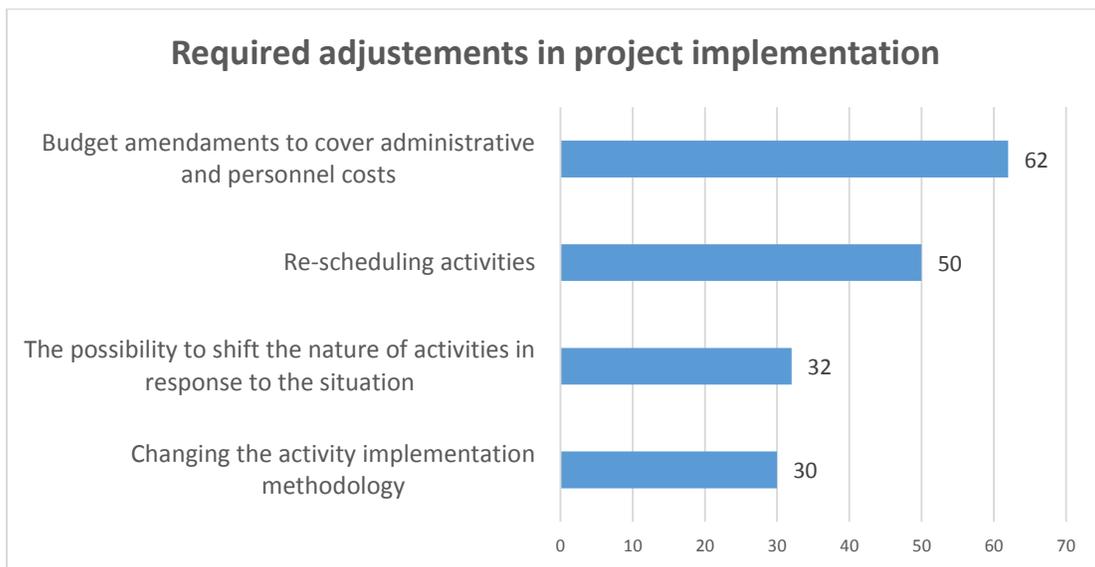
The assessment shows that for 47 projects out of 159 reported, CSOs are continuing their work partly online, assuming here the donors have provided clear guidance how to proceed during the quarantine time.

The situation remains problematic for the majority of projects, 112 in total, for which CSOs have stopped implementation, are waiting for instructions from donors or their funding contracts have been extended. For about 48 projects, CSOs are still waiting to get instructions from their donors.

In this situation, it is extremely important for all the donors to get in communication with their grant recipients and provide clear instructions about continuation of the projects and needed contractual revisions, when appropriate. It will be recommended for the donors to take into careful consideration the grant recipients needs in order to ensure continuation of the work, including here financial institutional support.

But, let's see what the CSOs propose as a viable solution to the situation.

- ✓ As it is seen, the major concern of CSOs is related to administrative and personnel salaries during the quarantine period. Financial inability to pay these costs jeopardizes the entire institutional setting of the organizations and create tax obligation repercussions. **A budget amendment or adjustment** is requested here.
- ✓ For obvious reasons another majority of CSOs are in need to **reschedule their activities**. They will need some activities to be rescheduled in short term considering the time lost during the transition between offline and online work. And, some other activities will need to be postponed to a later period, because online work does not fit to their targets (Roma, marginalized groups, remote communities with no access to internet and technology) or type of services they provide.
- ✓ There are CSOs that because of the type of services they provide and the needs of their targets group, consider that some **shifts in their planned activities** will be more appropriate and beneficial to the situation.
- ✓ **Changes in the activity methodology** is a justifiable and understandable request at this moment, but apparently the CSO have not gotten a go ahead from their donors, yet.



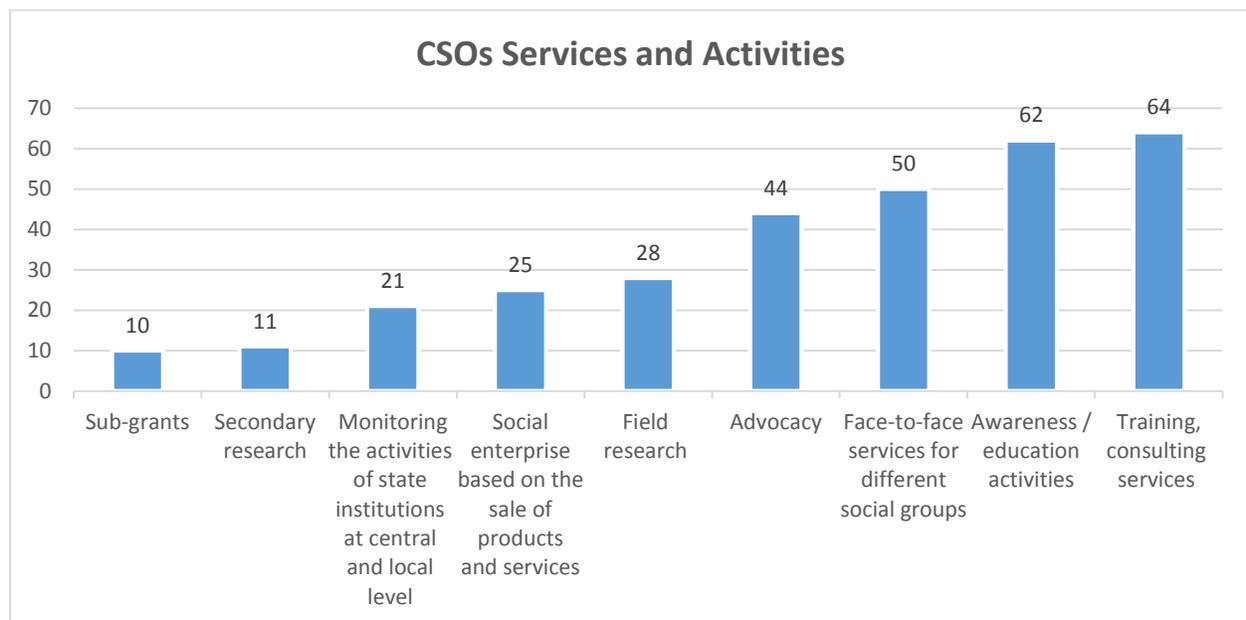
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3. What type of current services and products have the potential to be oriented to online platforms?

Most CSOs are engaged in more than one type of activity and are involved in both direct services such as counselling, training, etc. also in research activities, advocacy, etc.

The target group they serve is diverse as well, including mainly young people, women, individuals with special needs, the Roma and Egyptian community, people living in rural areas, other CSOs, social enterprises, local communities, etc.

- ✓ 75 out of 90 who currently have projects under implementation, **provide services and direct products**, and 64 CSOs offer **training and capacity building activities**, activities which can be adjusted and still can be offered through an alternative online methodology, if supported.
- ✓ A large number of CSOs think that in this situation they can manage to reach out and serve to most of their beneficiaries, if they adapt the work methodology. CSO need more information on adequate platforms that they can use for specific purposes i.e. **counselling, trainings, mentoring, promotion and sales of products and services** etc. Furthermore, they also need access in these platforms.



* Multiple choice question. The result is calculated based on responses of the 90 CSOs who are implementing projects at this moment

4. What are the specific needs with regard to access to and working skills with online tools? Online work is vastly the only way to carry out the activity during this emergency situation, and the non-for-profit sector is not very strong in IT solutions. Needs identified to this regard, may inform the donors' decisions about their support during this period.

CSOs consider that online collaboration tools and skills in using them, are crucial at the moment in order to ensure continuation of their work (i.e., internal and external communication and coordination, educational campaign, marketing, and most importantly service delivery).

But, only 15 CSOs are actually using some online platforms mostly for internal coordination, meetings with stakeholders and partners, delivery of trainings and information sessions.

The needs are of two types:

1. Relevant IT solutions and on collaboration platforms.

- ✓ About **60 CSOs** have expressed strong need for access to web meeting software to conduct group meetings, trainings and conferences.
- ✓ A small number, about **12 CSOs** are in need of equipment (i.e., laptops, tablets) and internet access to be able to work from home.

2. Other know - how support:

- ✓ Crisis management. Strategies to adapt to the new situation, including resource planning and allocation (financial, human resources etc); strategies to revise their programmatic work and shift of priorities.
- ✓ Adaptation of services to the online technology.
- ✓ Alternative fundraising methodologies and opportunities.