

**MOLDOVA
iNGO
FORUM**



Local Civil Society Coordination Gaps and Suggestions

Prepared for INGO Forum by: Marina Zagoret, Mihai Iovu, Victoria Kolotieva

Chişinău 2025

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Acronyms

LPA- Local Public Authorities

RCM- Refugee Coordination Model

CSO- Civil Society Organization

NGO- Non-governmental Organization

EU- European Union

INGO- International Non-governmental Organization

UN- United Nations

MoLSP – Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

MER – Ministry of Education and Research

Executive Summary

Note to Readers: While the assessment focused on humanitarian coordination within the RRP framework, it is important to note that several organisations positioned their needs, gaps and capacities within Moldova’s broader EU-accession and development context. These EU-related references emerged organically during interviews and reflected how CSOs interpret the evolving donor landscape, shifting financing instruments and the transition from emergency-style funding to development-oriented support.

Civil society coordination in Moldova has evolved before and after February 2022, shaped by emergency response as well as geographic, sectoral, and political factors. Prior to the escalation of the war in Ukraine, coordination among CSOs and with the state institutions was mainly project-driven, lacking cross-cutting structures and uneven across regions.

The reescalation of the war in Ukraine in 2022 **triggered mobilisation of civil society**, grassroots groups, and authorities, although, **initial response was characterised by chaotic coordination**, particularly in regions outside Chişinău. The **organisations which were involved into formal, informal, expertise-based networks and had trusted relationships** with local communities and authorities **were able to mobilise faster**.

Over time, the **Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)** has become more accessible for the local CSOs, but **engagement remains uneven**: well-established and mainly national CSOs demonstrate greater awareness of such mechanisms and involvement compared to smaller and regional organisations. Although, all CSOs report some sort of **constraints for involvement into coordination mechanisms** on a regular basis - from human capacity to limited accessibility, including language barriers. Additionally, participation is reported to be restricted to CSOs’ management staff, leaving field workers less informed.

Overall, while **Chişinău-based organisations** and those with **niche expertise maintain** stronger connections with national authorities and sectoral alliances/ networks, **regional CSOs**, particularly in the South and Transnistria keep coordinating mostly locally, **without consistent inclusion into broader coordination mechanisms** and donor engagement. **Coordination is functional mainly within specific thematic areas** (e.g. Child protection, legal support, temporary protection, etc.) and **at the community-level**, but lack formalized, functional cross-CSOs channels and/or LPA-CSO mechanisms. This is even more relevant for regional

organisations, especially CSOs in Transnistria that highlighted their limited access to donors and coordination structures, stressing the need for greater direct engagement to ensure tailored and effective responses.

Regional CSOs further reported their **struggle with reduced resources** and exclusion from direct donor partnerships, as **funds are often channelled through larger national or international actors**, although Chişinău-based CSOs also report **recent notable funding reductions**. Further **downscaling or withdrawal of international actors** (INGOs, UN agencies) was identified as a **critical risk**, not only in terms of funding but also the loss of technical expertise mentorship, advocacy influence, and possibly **increased competition**.

Having in mind three points mentioned by CSOs - **reported limited capacity of CSOs** to coordinate with international actors and among civil society community, recognised **necessity to be aware of up-to-date pull of actors** and existing services being provided by CSOs and multi-stakeholder coordination involving donors and authorities, CSOs suggested necessity to consider how transparent and inclusive coordination through digital platforms, multilingual resources (Romanian, Russian, English), and regular mapping¹ of local and international actors can be arranged.

Among **further needs**, civil society actors emphasized the need **to strengthen sustainability** through **resource diversification** beyond international donors. Suggested pathways include developing business partnerships, accessing government funds, diaspora support, local donations, and service accreditation by the state.

In conclusion, while **coordination** between CSOs, international actors and authorities, has improved since 2022, it **remains fragmented and unequal**, particularly outside the capital. Stronger, more inclusive coordination frameworks, sustained presence of international actors, and investments in local CSOs' financial resilience and advocacy capacities are essential to ensure **long-term sustainability and effective response to both humanitarian and development challenges**, including EU alignment process in Moldova.

Introduction

Context and Assessment Rationale. The February 2022 crisis served as a turning point for Moldova's civil society, showcasing rapid mobilization but also exposing structural weaknesses in coordination outside the capital. As donor funding faces increasing pressure and the international footprint shrinks, Moldovan CSOs must navigate a complex transition toward long-term development priorities linked to the EU alignment process.

Purpose of the Assessment. The **INGO Forum Steering Committee (SC)** initiated this targeted qualitative study to build an evidence base regarding the perspectives and priorities of local organizations. The goal is to inform the Forum's internal discussions about its future role in Moldova without raising immediate expectations of new financial support.

Objectives and Scope. The assessment focused on three primary objectives:

1. **Documenting coordination practices** before and after the 2022 escalation.
2. **Analyzing challenges and gaps** in cooperation between local CSOs, international actors, and government authorities.
3. **Identifying risks** associated with the downsizing of INGO presence and gathering local recommendations for systemic improvement.

By documenting these "lived experiences" the SC aims to support a more equitable dialogue between local, international, and governmental actors to shape a more resilient humanitarian and development response

¹ Please note that when it comes to RRP, sector coordination groups conduct yearly update of referral pathways, and information on ongoing activities is consolidated through tools such as Activity Info and the RRP dashboards. Here is the most recent update of the [Service Advisor platform in Moldova](#). Funding Opportunities for Local CSOs in Moldova you can find there [Search the Portal](#).

Civil society in Moldova has been central to the country's humanitarian and development response over the past several years, but its ability to coordinate effectively has varied greatly depending on **geography, sector, and available resources**. The escalation of the war in Ukraine in February 2022 represented a turning point for both international and local actors. On the one hand, CSOs mobilised rapidly, drawing on community trust and existing networks to provide immediate support to displaced persons and vulnerable Moldovan households. On the other hand, the crisis highlighted persistent weaknesses in coordination frameworks, particularly outside of Chişinău, where local organisations often struggled with **fragmented engagement, limited access to donors, and insufficient representation in decision-making processes**.

These dynamics remain highly relevant today. Donor funding is under pressure, **the presence of international NGOs (INGOs) is gradually shrinking**, and Moldova is simultaneously managing broader development priorities linked to its EU alignment process. For many CSOs, particularly those operating regionally, this combination of challenges raises concerns not only about immediate resource gaps but also about the long-term sustainability of their activities and their ability to maintain effective partnerships. In this context, the question of **how coordination can be made more inclusive, transparent, and resilient** has become a critical issue for both local actors and the international community.

It was against this backdrop that **the INGO Forum Steering Committee (SC) decided to initiate a focused assessment of coordination needs and practices among selected CSOs**. The purpose of the exercise was **not to raise expectations of immediate financial or programmatic support**, but rather to build a stronger evidence base that could inform the Forum's own internal deliberations about its future role. While members have discussed whether the Forum might expand its support to local actors, no decision has been taken. Nevertheless, it was widely recognised that any **such decision must be grounded in a clearer understanding of the perspectives, experiences, and priorities of local organisations themselves**.

The scope of this assessment was intentionally targeted. It sought to explore **how CSOs coordinated prior to February 2022**, how those practices shifted in the wake of the Ukraine crisis, and how organisations currently perceive their involvement in formal coordination mechanisms such as the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM). Beyond coordination, the assessment also examined CSOs' views on the implications of the downsizing of INGOs, including potential risks related to funding, technical expertise, advocacy influence, and the overall diversity of civil society. Importantly, it also captured suggestions from CSOs on how coordination can be strengthened and how partnerships with international actors, donors, and authorities can be sustained in ways that leave local organisations better prepared for future challenges.

The **objectives of the assessment** were therefore threefold:

1. To **document the coordination practices of CSOs before and after February 2022**, including their engagement with international and government-led platforms.
2. To **analyse the challenges and gaps perceived by CSOs** in their cooperation with INGOs, UN agencies, authorities, and other civil society actors.
3. To **identify the main risks and opportunities associated with the gradual withdrawal or downsizing of INGOs**, alongside CSOs' own recommendations for improving coordination and ensuring sustainability.

The report is structured to provide a clear and logical narrative. Following this Introduction, the Methodology section outlines the approach taken, including the sample of CSOs consulted and the limitations of the exercise. The Key Findings section then presents **evidence and perspectives across several dimensions: coordination before 2022, coordination since the Ukraine crisis, inclusion in the RCM, and the consequences of reduced INGO capacity**. A dedicated subsection highlights concrete suggestions from CSOs themselves. Finally, the Conclusions draw together the main themes, reflecting on the current state of civil

society coordination in Moldova and **identifying pathways for strengthening resilience, sustainability, and inclusiveness** in the years ahead.

In sum, this assessment was undertaken to ensure that discussions within the Forum, and among its members, are informed by the voices and lived experiences of local actors. It acknowledges the diversity of Moldova's civil society, the unevenness of its coordination landscape, and the pressing need for stronger, more equitable frameworks. By documenting both challenges and opportunities, the SC aims to provide a clearer picture of the realities facing CSOs today and to support more constructive dialogue between local organisations, international actors, and authorities in shaping Moldova's humanitarian and development response.

Methodology

The assessment was conceived as a targeted qualitative study, aiming to capture the perspectives of a selected group of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Moldova. Its primary purpose was to explore how coordination practices have evolved before and after February 2022, to assess CSOs' engagement in existing mechanisms such as the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), and to gather their views on the implications of the gradual reduction of international NGO (INGO) presence. Rather than seeking to be statistically representative, the study prioritised depth and diversity of perspectives, allowing space for organisations to articulate both challenges and opportunities within their specific contexts.

Data collection was carried out between July and August 2025 through semi-structured interviews. Both in-person and online formats were used in order to include organisations operating outside of Chişinău. A set of guiding questions ensured consistency across interviews, while also leaving scope for participants to raise issues of particular relevance to their work. The questions addressed four main themes: coordination practices prior to and after February 2022; involvement in formal mechanisms such as the RCM; perceived gaps in cooperation with INGOs, UN agencies, and national and local authorities; and concerns about the downsizing of INGOs. Each interview also invited participants to share suggestions on how coordination could be strengthened going forward. To ensure transparency and reliability, consent forms were signed by all interviewees and detailed notes were taken during each discussion.

The sample consisted of eight organisations with varying profiles and geographic bases. Five were located in Chişinău, one in the North (Bălţi), one in the South (Comrat), and one in Transnistria. The organisations were selected on the basis of their prior engagement in coordination-related discussions, including participation in the NRC–WVI panel event in April 2025, as well as existing partnerships with Forum members. This selection ensured that the study drew on the experiences of both capital-based and regional actors, and that it included perspectives from a politically sensitive and often under-represented context such as Transnistria.

The information collected was analysed thematically, with responses grouped around the key areas of inquiry. This approach made it possible to identify commonalities across CSOs, highlight differences between capital-based and regional organisations, and draw attention to issues that may not be captured through formal coordination platforms. The analysis did not aim to generate quantitative measures of coordination effectiveness but to surface the lived experiences and concerns of local actors in their own words.

Several limitations and challenges must be acknowledged. First, the small sample size means that the findings cannot be generalised to all Moldovan CSOs; they should instead be read as indicative of broader patterns and issues. Second, the sample was weighted toward organisations based in Chişinău, leaving regional and rural voices less represented despite efforts to include perspectives from the North, South, and Transnistria. Third, expectation management was a challenge throughout the process. Although care was taken to clarify

that the assessment was designed to inform internal Forum discussions rather than provide direct support, there remained a risk that organisations might anticipate follow-up engagement.

Despite these constraints, the methodology provided a valuable lens into the realities of local coordination. By bringing together perspectives from organisations operating in diverse contexts, the study generated timely insights into how CSOs perceive existing mechanisms, what risks they associate with reduced international presence, and what opportunities they see for strengthening cooperation. These findings now serve as an important evidence base to inform ongoing discussions within the INGO Forum and guide reflections on how coordination frameworks in Moldova might be adapted to better reflect the needs and capacities of local civil society.

Key Findings

COORDINATION: Pre-February 2022

When it comes to coordination practices used by CSOs/NGOs before reescalation of the war in Ukraine in 2022, it is worth mentioning that regardless of profile, most CSOs participating in the interviews indicated that existing coordination was rather limited and even “fragmented”, as described by one of the KI. Most commonly, coordination was reported to be project-driven, interestingly, some CSOs understood it primarily as the coordination between the partners within a project, suggesting both lack of awareness of wider coordination possibilities, limited cross-CSOs connections and possibly, at the time, no need in such coordination. Some CSOs mentioned engagement in the national platforms such as [NGO Council](#)², [Eastern Partnership Civil Society Platform](#)³ and awareness about wider initiatives such as [CSO Meter](#)⁴.

A few **key differences** between coordination practices were shaped by geography of operations – national *versus* regional, expertise and participation in sectoral networks or alliances. Thus, Chişinău-based organisations, specifically the ones with narrow focus (e.g. child protection, people with disabilities) reported to have functional coordination mechanisms between CSOs within the sector and authorities at both national (line Ministries, Parliament) and local levels, e.g. municipality level (*primaria*).

“Our organisation has 27 years of experience, of course we have been involved into working groups with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Protection. Also, we are part of [NGO alliance for child protection - APSCF](#)⁵.” – KI from Central Region

Although, thematic non-formalised coordination was also reported by a regional CSO, engaging both at regional and national level:

“At the regional level, there aren’t formal coordination platforms organized by a central secretariat. There are some platforms for anti-corruption, human rights, or other initiatives, when a few organizations come together to promote an idea or prevent certain government actions.” – KI from Northern Region

Further, **regional CSOs** reported rather well-established and functional, although not always formalised, channels for coordination with local authorities, while possibilities to connect with national authorities remained limited or non-existent. The latter is particularly relevant for CSOs in Transnistria which seem to have been particularly disconnected when it comes to coordination with wider Moldovan civil society community, donors and central authorities. Coordination was mostly project-related and limited to platforms

² Consiliul ONG - <https://www.consiliuong.md/>

³ Moldovan National Platform. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Platform - <https://www.eap-csf.md/en/>

⁴ CSO Meter <https://csometer.info/contact>

⁵ The Alliance of Active NGOs in the field of Child and Family Social Protection (APSCF) - <https://aliantacf.md/en/home-page-en/>

between partners in Transnistria and donors, although some larger projects fostered cooperation **across both banks of Dniester River through regular consultations within joint initiatives.**

In the South, some efforts were made to establish and maintain local **informal networks of small, rural NGOs**, however, coordination remained **informal, project-based, and donor-dependent**, with activities largely stopping once funding ended. Apart from bilateral partnerships and cooperation with national CSOs and some donors, overall national engagement for civil society actors from the South remained limited, with only one organisation representing southern region at NGO Council. Engagement with authorities was mainly characterized by **close cooperation with** city halls.

Overall, pre-2022 coordination can be characterized as limited when it comes to cross-CSO coordination and/or formalised channels between civil society and authorities, but functional when related to certain thematic areas. In short it can be summarised as **geographically uneven, fragmented** for regional and community-based actors and **sectoral** for CSO with strong or niche thematic focus and well-established ones.

COORDINATION: Post-February 2022 Inclusion into RCM and Gaps

After February 2022, with overall mobilization of civil society in response to the influx of refugees from Ukraine to Moldova, the coordination patterns have evolved, **reflecting increased urge in coordination coming from both civil society and authorities.** Limitations and gaps in coordination have also been changing throughout 3,5 years, with some still remaining.

Initial phase – first 2-3 months after reescalation, was characterized by unprecedented mobilisation of Moldovan civil society, grass root groups, individual citizens and authorities, however, as reported by all interviewees, the overall response lacked coordinating platforms and mechanisms. This was particularly the case at the regional level, where the assistance from central level, INGOs and donors started reaching with delay compared to Chişinău.

“When it all started, there was no coordination at any level—national, local, or regional. It was total chaos.”
– KI from Northern Region

“It started off as total chaos. No donor presence or local NGO support at first because no one had any orientation. Local authorities and residents were the first responders. People gathered clothing, shared housing info, created Telegram groups for communication.” – KI Southern Region

Overall, the organisations which were involved in **any sort of networking previously and had visibility with communities and cooperation with authorities** prior to crisis, reported it helped mobilise resources, amplify assistance, reach and avoid duplication of efforts before centralised coordination was established.

“We had our network because of 47 youth organizations and also youth councils around the country for us this crisis and because we had many connections prior to 2022 helped us to coordinate faster and to give a more immediate response because in such situation we need a very huge coordination and in case you don't have such connections around the country probably such response could be more difficult.” – KI Central Region

“We were already known by authorities and other local and national actors, this factor helped a lot in coordination needs after February 2022 and that helped us out.” – KI Central Region

By late 2023, however, many CSOs reported a **decline in structured coordination** as donor funding shrank and INGOs scaled down. While this reduced duplication, it also created gaps, particularly in support for vulnerable refugees (e.g., people with disabilities, women unable to work, children requiring protection). All organisations mentioned that **centralised multi-stakeholder coordination efforts** are necessary and helpful both when it comes to refugee response and wider Moldovan context of civil society activities.

“These coordination meetings are really productive. Recently the meetings have become really solution-based. So, you have I/NGOs, you have UN agency or other donors, and we and the Ministry can directly ask for support. And it is productive because after these meetings we could have support and we can provide our services.” – KI Central Region.

Across organizations, **participation in the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)** has varied in frequency and consistency. **Geographical and human capacity factors** influenced the engagement patterns; thus, well-established, mostly Chişinău-based organisations show greater awareness of existing mechanisms and engagement into formal mechanisms and also directly with international actors – INGOs, UN agencies or other donors. While some organisations mentioned coordination was intense and frequent – weekly meetings, reporting, too many working groups and broad donor involvement, others mentioned they were only somewhat involved due to lack of human capacity. A few organisations mentioned indirect participation and involvement, as being part of big projects, and consortia, were somewhat involved in coordination, reporting and information sharing through INGOs. A few organisations also reported that mostly the management was “invited” and involved into various coordination meetings both with wider humanitarian community and the government, whereas field/ programmes staff lacked awareness about existing coordination mechanisms and related updates.

When it comes to **Local Refugee Coordination Forum**⁶, only one organisation reported being involved directly into the local structure in the South, while the rest did not seem to be informed well-enough about such structures⁷. The CSO that participated in the Local Refugee Council mentioned that the **Coordination Councils have turned more into reporting platforms for local-level organizational activity**, which is a positive practice overall, however, it does not offer sufficient accessibility and participation for the refugees themselves.

“In remote villages, people say no one visits them, no one asks anything, and no one is interested. So, information from them barely reaches us. Coordination councils happen in cities, but almost never in villages. Aid and information rarely get there—unfortunately, that’s the reality.” – KI, Southern Region

Lack of CSOs engagement into or awareness of the organisations about RCM might be related to a few factors: lack of human capacities to participate in the meetings on a regular basis, gradual shifting focus from refugee response to wider Moldovan context or prioritizing initial CSO’s expertise, and lack of efforts from the international community to involve local responders directly into coordination mechanisms.

Main gaps mentioned by CSOs during the interviews were not connected to coordination mechanisms between local and international actors as such but rather to a gap in the flow of funding and communication with international organisations and donors. Reportedly international actors and donors rarely engage directly with smaller local actors, preferring instead to channel resources through larger national (Chişinău-based) or international intermediaries. This creates a hierarchy in which established CSOs with long donor histories benefit from continuous cooperation, while smaller or regional NGOs only access opportunities when invited as implementing partners or sub-contractors. Direct partnerships are rare, with few exceptions where international donors have sought out local expertise for specific projects.

⁶ Moldova: Local Refugee Coordination Forum - <https://data.unhcr.org/en/working-group/386?sv=0&geo=0>

⁷ This conclusion relies on the data received from the CSOs coming from the **South** region and might not fully represent actual engagement of local CSOs into Local Refugee Coordination Forums.

“I’d say international donors should shift their focus back to regional organizations, based on the region’s needs. Because, again, we always talk about efficient use of funds. If an organization from Chişinău has to travel to the region every time, imagine how much will be spent on transport alone. So just from a logistics perspective, this is what we’re talking about — that funds should go where they’re really needed.” – KI, Southern Region

When it comes to the gaps related to **coordination with authorities**, overall cooperation was described by CSOs very positively, although, some challenges were still reported around dialogue and follow-up with central authorities, implying delayed replies and decisions for certain matters. Additionally, CSOs mention that while line ministries/ state agencies recognise their expertise and often request their involvement, often ad-hoc, there is a lack of sustainable mechanisms, such as service accreditation or financing frameworks, that allow CSOs to systematically deliver services. In contrast, to central-level advocacy which requires long processes, persistence, and repeated engagement, which smaller CSOs with limited human resources struggle to sustain, at the municipal level, smaller bureaucratic processes sometimes make collaboration easier and more impactful, however, officials often lack the skills to work effectively with civil society.

Reduction in INGO Capacity

Across organizations, the departure or downsizing of INGOs is seen as highly concerning because it threatens both organizational survival and the sustainability of services for refugees and vulnerable groups.

“The concerns are huge. And I’ll explain why. The problem is still there, it hasn’t been solved. Unfortunately. People are still coming, and those who had been living in villages are now migrating into cities, trying to rebuild their lives... funding is drying up, and frustration is growing. “Why isn’t anyone coming to us?” “You forgot about us,” they say. We’re getting lots of calls — “No one visits us anymore,” “No one comes at all.” We don’t have the capacity. We try as much as we can to reach everyone we worked with before so that the cuts aren’t so deeply felt. But again — the problem remains, it’s unresolved. And if it’s unresolved and resources are taken away, the same situation as the first half of 2022 will repeat.” – KI, Northern Region

The most **pressing risks** reported include **funding gaps, loss of technical expertise, reduced advocacy, and weakened capacity to deliver long-term support**, including highly-specialised services (e.g. rehabilitation of children victims of violence). A few CSOs involved in refugee response in bigger projects since the beginning of re-escalation highlight those recent reductions of the current level of funding is already affecting their operations, as shrinking budget make their structures and operational capacities fragile, while refugee/ community needs remain unresolved, particularly when it comes to most vulnerable – families with children, the elderly. This is the situation, both national, Chişinău-based organisations and the regional ones face:

“Considering the regional context, international donors no longer work with regional authorities, so we had to pause all projects that could have benefited the region. The assistance we’re able to provide has shrunk drastically. The small-scale projects we bring to the region create some improvement in the short term, but in the long run, we need large-scale projects that improve infrastructure, public services, and so on. I believe that without international support, the region will stagnate completely, and we won’t recover. There are major concerns about the upcoming elections, and we, as a regional organization, will likely feel the impact first.” – KI, Southern Region.

“We already feel that funding has been greatly reduced, and even though we still have a few projects with large organisations, anyway, the projects and funding, were considerably reduced, and this affects the life of organization.” – KI, Central Region.

“In low-income region, in particular with ongoing energy crisis, it is difficult for those refugees and locals who didn't manage to get employed or start an enterprise” – KI, Transnistria.

Moreover, withdrawal or downscaling of international actors and donors can create higher competition for funding and partnerships which might be particularly unfavourable for smaller, less capacitated organisations, thus, potentially affecting diversity of civil society. With withdrawal of USAID, this type of competition is already notable, with some organisations struggling to find financing for their primary focus and target audience.

International actors - INGOs and UN agencies are regarded **not only as funders but also as capacity-builders**, mentors, and connectors to larger international frameworks. Without their presence, many CSOs fear stagnation, collapse, or an inability to respond to both humanitarian and development challenges. CSOs also mention risks of civil society being unable/ **not ready to respond and implement quality programming in light of EU accession process without INGOs**, especially when it comes to financial resource management.

“It's not only about financing but about the organisation's development, because we receive also guidance how to develop our organisation based on our own powers, it's related to managerial structure in our organisation. So that's why I mentioned that it's very important to maintain the presence of international organizations at this moment in Moldova.” – KI Central Region

One of the key points raised during the interviews is **the critical role of international NGOs in Moldova in their credibility and influence in advocacy**. As mentioned during the interviews, the assessments or research produced by local NGOs are often not taken as seriously by policymakers, whereas studies or initiatives backed by international NGOs carry greater weight and legitimacy. This trust factor makes international actors vital partners in pushing for policy change, strengthening anti-corruption efforts, and ensuring political will is mobilised. Overall, the partnership with an international organisation remains essential to maximise endorsement of local expertise.

Suggestions from CSOs

Suggestions of CSOs can be divided into several key areas: **Capacity Building and Sustainability, Partnerships and Coordination, Access to Information and inclusion**.

All CSOs mentioned that to address risks of donor withdrawal and funding reductions, local civil society needs to **develop capacities on resources diversification** beyond international donors to ensure financial stability and resilience. It can be achieved through fostering business partnerships, accessing government funds, service accreditation and acquisition from CSOs by the state, diaspora support, and local donations. In regard to donations and fundraising, awareness and capacities need to be developed both for CSOs and the public, as it is not common in Moldova to donate for charity or CSO work.

Investing in partnerships would be another crucial point, this implies joint planning between international actors, local civil society and beneficiaries. The need of direct engagement with the donors, international actors was specifically highlighted by regional/ community-based civil society organisations, as this allows to leverage deep local knowledge, community trust and maximise the outcomes.

When it comes to **overall coordination**, joint efforts have to be done to ensure proper up-to date mapping of local and international actors and donors providing support. This would imply provision of open and accessible information on funding rules, research standards, and international partners, while ensuring availability of resources in multiple languages (Russian, English, Romanian) to reduce barriers.

Conclusions

- **Coordination with local authorities** remain essential for CSOs and authorities. Overall, cooperation seems effective, although, sometimes is only bilateral, lacking a more centralised, structured and transparent approach;
- In most cases **LPAs are open**, as interested to cooperate to attract more funding to the community;
- **Coordination with the national authorities** is majorly based on the sector and profile of civil society actors involved, good example is CSOs coordination with MoLSP, MER and related agencies;
- **Coordination among local CSOs and between international and local organisations** remain limited due to lack of human capacities, shifting focus from refugee response to wider Moldovan context or prioritizing initial CSO's expertise, and lack of efforts from the international community to involve local responders directly into coordination mechanisms;
- **Multi-stakeholder coordination** involving local civil society international actors and authorities seems even more fragmented and based on specific thematic areas;
- **Cross-CSO coordination** through networking events; digital tools combining information about activities/ services, focus, area of operations, funding possibilities and donor mapping; a functional digital platform with a clear agenda and governing body, uniting CSOs in Moldova is needed, as CSOs might not have capacity to engage in-person on a regular basis;
- **Regional organisations** seem less connected to coordination structures, INGOs and donors, preventing direct field information circulation, and eventually resulting in poor planning of the regional response and projects targeting specific communities;
- **CSOs from Transnistria** in this regard seem to have even less access to information, direct engagement and coordination with wider civil society communities and donors, due to objective reasons related to political constraints in the region;
- **Presence of international actors** (INGOs, UN Agencies) is seen by local CSOs as crucial for financial support and capacity development