

ICPS newsletter

British and Ukrainians jointly develop country assistance strategy

Technical assistance programs for Ukraine are more effective and fruitful when they are carefully designed and discussed with Ukrainian partners before the beginning of implementation. The draft of the British government's new Country Assistance Strategy for Ukraine is rooted in the British government's development policy as set out in White Papers of 1997 and 2000. This is a framework strategy for eliminating poverty in Ukraine, which will be implemented during four years beginning December 2001, after the British Secretary of State approves the document. The Country Assistance Strategy was discussed with representatives of the Administration of the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; and a series of consultations with public organisations and think tanks was initiated. Representatives of non-government organisations discussed the British government's Country Assistance Strategy for Ukraine at ICPS's roundtable last week

Is the strategy realistic?

Discussion participants evaluated whether the draft of the British government's Country Assistance Strategy for Ukraine met the overall requirements for such documents. (Main theses are presented in the box on page 2.)

According to Anatoli Hrytsenko, president of the Razumkov Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Policy Research, this document is sooner a list of objectives than a strategy, the latter being a package of goals determined on the basis of available resources, along with ways for their achievement. "If we compare the resources stipulated in this document to its goals, we will see that these resources are evidently insufficient. Thus, the priorities should be adjusted," Mr. Hrytsenko noted.

Mr. Dmytro Liapin, vice-president of the Institute of Competitive Society, believes that evaluation criteria should be developed for this strategy. After four years of strategy realisation, these criteria should allow both Ukrainian and British partners to conclude whether the results are positive or not. He said, "negative results are viewed as an outcome only in science, while in the social sphere negative results are equal to failure".

Representatives of the British Department for International Development (DFID) noted that their objective was only to identify possible areas of activity. Gradually, the strategy will be filled in with more specific content and projects.

Who is to receive support?

The strategy envisions close co-operation with a wide range of partners, particularly with the governments at national and regional levels, public and international institutions. "We will balance our work with state authorities and with non-government organisations," emphasised Ms. Viktoriya Spaschenko, DFID program officer. Another main principle of the strategy is the geographic balancing of technical assistance between the Eastern, Western, and Central regions of Ukraine.

Government. Today, Ukraine is in extreme need of technical assistance aimed at building government capacity for planning and managing the reform process, and at establishing new institutions and introducing procedures and standards according to the best worldwide practices.

According to Andrii Vyshnevsky, an ICPS expert, Ukraine needs an assistance program that guarantees the continued operation of individual projects within the program after their completion, by effective government and non-government institutions. These structures should be installed in the Ukrainian government machine and civil society. "Today, Ukraine should carry on a constructive dialogue with donors (in particular, with the British side) regarding the clear definition of its problems, needs, requirements, and expectations," Mr. Vyshnevsky said, also stating that technical assistance would

ICPS launches its new Internet web-site

A new version of the official web-site of the International Centre for Policy Studies has been posted on the Internet this week. We have significantly increased the volume of detailed information published on ICPS areas of specialisation and services, including all project outputs and selected training materials.

Web-site structure

The web-site information resources are structured according to ICPS areas of specialisation and services. ICPS projects are placed within the framework of corresponding activities and services. ICPS's web-site is bilingual—information is published both in Ukrainian and English, with users freely able to navigate from any part of our web-site.

Resource opportunities

ICPS's new web-site has been developed to make easily available large volume of materials for researchers who gather information or seek to improve their professional skills.

A special web-site section titled "Publications" contains both the newest issues and the archive of all publications. Also on the web-site you can subscribe to electronic-format ICPS publications.

In the new section titled "Library" you can find ICPS's project outputs, as well as training materials and research developed by Ukrainian and foreign advisors on topics such as public administration, policy analysis, fiscal and macroeconomic policy, strategic planning, and communication management.

You can find the ICPS web-site at www.icps.kiev.ua. Please send your comments or suggestions regarding web-site functioning to Maria Melnyk (mmelnyk@icps.kiev.ua).

become more effective once it was directed at resolving key problems of the transition process in Ukraine.

Public organisations. Existing institutions of the non-government sector should become active players in the process of strategy implementation. Mr. Oleh Soskin, director of the Institute of Transformation of Society, offered to create a consortium of organisations from the third sector that would undertake their own functions in the process of strategy implementation. Mr. Soskin believes that currently there is a serious conflict between the government machine and the third sector, as the latter embodies the trends towards civil society development while the former is still inclined to the old authoritarian regime.

However, according to Mr. Liapin, "The aspiration to establishing an integrated body representing the interests of the third sector is wrong by its nature from the very beginning."

Society. Technical assistance should be targeted at Ukrainian society; individuals should also be recipients of aid, not the elite of the third sector. According to Mr. Mykhailo Pohrebynsky, director of the Kyiv Centre for Political Research and Conflict Studies, individuals in general and society as a whole will be able to directly benefit from assistance programs if they are granted in such forums as the Internet or TV. Other channels to deliver assistance to concrete persons include structured programs aimed at supporting the sick and elderly, and resolving problems of homeless children.

Strategy implementation issues

Poverty evaluation. The strategy function is to point out real measures for eliminating poverty in Ukraine. The strategy purpose is to provide public policy with real tools and mechanisms for its realisation—which is a weak spot in all Ukrainian programs.

"One of the main outputs of this program should be the synthesising of experience in poverty evaluation and corresponding approaches. Both in the world and in Ukraine there are qualitative systems of indicators measuring the level of welfare, but there are no indicators reflecting the existence of opportunities or lack thereof," said Volodymyr Nikitin, an ICPS expert.

According to Oleksander Orlenko, president of the Ukrainian Institute for Entrepreneurship, above all it is necessary to refrain from the

The British government's Country Assistance Strategy for Ukraine (main thesis)

The aim of the British government's Country Assistance Strategy is to support sustainable social and economic regeneration and reduced poverty in Ukraine.

According to the strategy paper, all resources will be focused on three key outputs:

1. Enhanced capacity of state institutions

Reform of state institutions, both at national and local government levels, is a major challenge, without which little progress can be made on the priorities set out in the government's poverty elimination programme. British technical assistance will support:

- the development of a more efficient, effective, and accountable public administration system;
- the introduction of more effective and transparent budgetary procedures;
- improvement in the clarity, consistency, and effectiveness of enabling legislation;
- improvement of the business environment for small and medium enterprises;
- the development of policies to create an enabling environment for the growth of the rural economy;
- the development of more effective social services, the transfer and maintenance of social sphere assets, and better targeting of benefits and entitlements, so that they meet the needs of the poorest;
- the Government's efforts to formulate and implement trade policy.

2. Increased livelihood opportunities

In order to lift people out of poverty, Ukraine needs both to create secure jobs with adequate remuneration and to promote sustainable opportunities for self-employment, which will deliver adequate income. British technical assistance will support Ukraine to:

- strengthen support services to rural and urban enterprises and to put them on a more sustainable footing;
- create jobs, both by improving the quality and sustainability of state reemployment services and by supporting training and employment initiatives by local entities;
- create and maintain regional development agencies;
- improve the competitiveness of Ukrainian businesses;
- develop enterprise education programmes in schools and technical colleges.

3. A strengthened civil society, underpinned by an independent media and the rule of law.

British technical assistance will support:

- the creation of greater accountability of the government through deeper democracy, by direct support to non-governmental organisations and by helping to strengthen the independence of the media;
- the justice system to strengthen the rule of law, so that the legal system applies human rights legislation and people are aware of their rights and able to gain access to justice;
- the development of community-based organisations, to help them respond better to the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals.

mechanical application of statistical data on income and unemployment, which sometimes distorts reality, and to investigate the level of poverty in every region from both social and economic viewpoints. Mr. Orlenko believes that "this is the only way to find out the actual causes of poverty spreading, which unfortunately are not determined in the strategy". And only then should the evaluation criteria be designed.

Specific goals for Ukraine. According to Mr. Hrytsenko, at the first stage it is necessary to draw up a whole list of objectives, to determine what was fulfilled and what should be done. He believes that it is important to take into account available

resources and the willingness of government and non-government organisations to support and carry out formulated tasks. Thus, the strategy should be filled with content which is specific to Ukraine and based on available resources. ■

The roundtable on "Discussing the Strategy of Technical Assistance Granted by the British Government to Ukraine" was held on 18 July 2001. Co-organisers were the British Department for International Development and the International Centre for Policy Studies.

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