

Minutes

CANADA-UKRAINE
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AND
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



КАНАДА-УКРАЇНА
ПРОЕКТ «РЕГІОНАЛЬНЕ
ВРЯДУВАННЯ ТА РОЗВИТОК»

Project Steering Committee

Tuesday, April 25, 2006 14:00-17:00

Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Room 314, Toronto, Canada

1. Call to Order

Andrew Farncombe, Project Director, International Partnerships, Canadian Urban Institute, called the meeting to order.

2. Welcoming Remarks

Andrew Farncombe welcomes the participants and introduces Alan Stewart, CIDA Project Officer, Al Vigoda, Civil Society expert, and Mirabelle Rodrigues, Executive Director, Foundation for International Training. Mr. Farncombe then described the organizational structure and logistics of the Project Steering Committee (PSC). The PSC meets at least semi-annually, provides advice and strategic direction, endorses activities, and ensures the project is working towards results. He notes that Ukraine is one of CIDA's 25 strategic countries and good governance is one of their main priorities so the results of the RGD project are highly important to CIDA. Mr. Farncombe briefly reviews then agenda, discusses the purpose of the study tour to Canada, and introduces all participants. He calls on Svitlana Verkhovlyadova, Deputy Head of Department for Regional Development and Head of Department for Coordination of Regional Economic Departments, as representative of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine (MEU) to make a few introductory remarks.

Ms. Verkhovlyadova welcomes the participants to the meeting. She notes that the law on stimulation of regional development outlines the following tasks: transfer to strategic planning for regional development, support for depressed territories, establish contracts with regions, and develop mechanisms for implementation. She notes that the study tour meetings have been very valuable especially the system of federal, provincial and municipal governments; financing system for governments; and extrapolating the planning systems to the Ukrainian context.

Mr. Farncombe passes the floor to Alan Stewart to made a few welcoming remarks on behalf of CIDA. Mr. Stewart welcomes the participants and congratulates them on the first year of the project. He notes that the project was restructured in November at CIDA's request, which was a difficult but well implemented transfer. There is now a solid base for the project to move forward. All the activities planned for the first year were accomplished including the baseline reports, forums, and study tour.

3. Election of Co-Chair

During the last PSC meeting, a motion to elect a co-chair from the MEU was passed. Mr. Stewart suggests that the co-chairs should be institutional seats held by CUI and MEU. Mr. Nuser makes a motion, and Mr. VanDooren seconds it and the motion to have CUI and MEU as co-chairs of the PSC passes. Svitlana Verkhovlyadova is elected co-chair along with Andrew Farncombe for this PSC meeting.

4. Review and approval of minutes from PSC meeting, 9 November 2005

Mr. Farncombe asks the delegates to review the minutes of the previous PSC meeting and to raise any questions or comments at that time. Since there are no questions, Mr. Stewart makes a motion to accept the minutes, Mr. Sin seconds, and the motion passes.

5. Review and Endorsement of Project Implementation Plan / Overview of Project Achievements, November 2005-April 2006 / Review and Endorsement of Annual Work Plan, April 2006-March 2007

Chris VanDooren, Project Manager, International Partnerships, Canadian Urban Institute, introduces the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and reviews the changes to it since the last PSC meeting. These changes are only in the management section as new staff were hired and the Ukrainian project partner is now the National Association of Regional Development Agencies, with a different role than the previous partner.

Yuri Polianski, RGD Ukrainian Project Manager, discusses the achievements of the last year of the RGD Project, including its organizational and programmatic activities.

Mr. VanDooren asks for the endorsement of the new PIP. Mr. Stewart makes a motion to endorse the PIP, Mr. Sin seconds it, and the motion passes.

Mr. Sin notes that the consultation meetings held over the weekend with representatives from both regions helped them to understand the project better and they now feel involved in all aspects of it.

Ihor Sanzharovskyi, RGD Senior Technical Advisor, and Tibor Frank, Lead International Expert, outline the plans for the next fiscal year. Mr. Frank notes that the first year was the design phase (partner engagement and needs assessment) and now we are entering the implementation phase to respond to the needs of the pilot oblasts and the MEU. Mr. Sanzharovskyi describes the 100-level activities (National-Level Policy and Regional Dialogue Development), 200-level activities (Capacity Building), and 300-level activities (Participatory Planning).

Mr. Frank concludes by noting that there is strong agreement that stakeholders must be involved in the planning process and that this plan will be created by all stakeholders; the project is here to help in this process.

Mr. Farncombe opens the floor to questions regarding the work plan. Mr. Stewart asks what the role of the MEU in regional strategic planning is. Ms. Verkhovlyadova responds that the process of completing the State Strategy for Regional Development (SSRD), which outlines the national role and priorities, is almost over. Regional plans will have to comply with the SSRD and they will have to take national priorities into account when planning.

Olexandr Syn, First Deputy Head, Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, remarks that regional budgets are funded by the State and often strategic planning is not funded properly so there needs to be better coordination between the MEU and Oblast State Administrations (OSA) to ensure plans are supported by funds. The OSAs do not want to change the rules; they need more support for their programs.

Mr. Stewart asks if the funding comes from the MEU and Ms. Verkhovlyadova clarifies that it comes from the State Treasury.

Mr. Farncombe asks how the public will be involved. Ernest Nuser, Head of Main Department for European Integration, Foreign Economic Relations and Tourism, Zakarpattia Oblast State Administration, responds that a new system of regional development will come with the constitutional changes and the role and responsibilities of elected and appointed officials will also

change. Ukraine wants to achieve what Canada and the EU have so the country has to define public partners since NGO leaders often represent a narrow field. The governments need to expand who is involved on behalf of the public. They need to reach out to grassroots organizations, small NGOs, public groups, RDAs, interest groups, and the press (radio, newspaper, online, and TV).

Volodymyr Hoblyk, Deputy Head, Zakarpattya Oblast State Administration, adds that they are trying to build the capacity of municipal self-governments to engage the public. But parties are weak and not represented in the authorities. During the last elections, the rayons and oblasts used party lists for the elections and it operates on a majority system. The oblasts need to engage the rural councils and leaders of political parties plus engage directly at the community level to ensure representation. They would like to have twinning programs, especially with Niagara, to learn more about this.

Ms. Rodrigues notes that stakeholder mapping might be a good tool to know what groups are out there. You also learn whether these stakeholders have the capacity to participate through meetings and the Internet and how they can respond to various types of public engagement strategies. Mr. Frank notes that a communication and/or engagement strategy will be completed to address these issues in each oblast.

Next, Mr. Farncombe asks what do the Cabinet of Ministers and Presidential Secretariat see as their role in the RGD Project. Vitalli Puhach, First Deputy Head of Department for Regional Policy, Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers, responds that they review all MEU and OSA plans plus new laws that are relevant to this topic. They also issue operational directives to the ministries. Oleksandr Mytchenok, Chief Specialist, Main Department for Social and Economic Development, Secretariat of the President of Ukraine, notes the limitations of the President's role in economic policy but there are two key areas: 1) the President controls regional contracts and 2) the Presidential Secretariat can accumulate experience and best practices in economic policy and civil society engagement and share this knowledge with the regions.

Mr. Farncombe asks if there was a motion to endorse the work plan, Mr. Hoblyk makes a motion, Mr. Polianski seconds it, and the motion passes.

8. Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between CUI, MEU, OSA-Zakarpattya, and OSA-Zaporizhzhia

Mr. Farncombe, Mr. Hoblyk, and Mr. Syn sign the Memorandum of Understanding. Ms. Verkhovlyadova is not authorized to sign on behalf of the MEU so this will be accomplished later in Kyiv.

As there was no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn is made and passes.